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ABSTRACT

This collection of 35 poems, essays, and extracts from daily journals offers insight into the thoughts and experiences of prison education and prison life from the prisoner's perspective. The contributions come from men and women prisoners and young offenders from various ethnic backgrounds from 14 prisons; they demonstrate just how much can be achieved in prisons. Titles are as follows: Reflections of Society; An Easy Option Full of Skivers; Anyway What Did I Want with a Computer; A Lesson from a Fool; The Light of Education; A Silly Old Buffer; My First Week in Education; The Turning Point of My Sentence; An Oasis of Serenity; "Three Paragraphs" I; "Three Paragraphs" II; "Three Paragraphs" III; "Three Paragraphs" IV; "Three Paragraphs" V; This Week My Challenge Was Won; A Complete New Outlook; What's Education For?; The Mind and the Body Link; "Seven Lonely Days"; Encouraged, Not Pushed; An Education; Daft to Waste All the Knowledge I Have Collected, Isn't It?; Literary Terms; Education; Adult Learning; I've Mastered Percentages; 15 Miles to Maidstone; Diary; Words and Birds; My Work Diary; A Week of Learning; We Get Nearer to Our Goal; Still So Much to Read; I Won't Be Back; and Becoming a Fully Fledged Listener. (YLB)

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ED 423 442

PRISON EDUCATION DIARIES

A collection of poems, essays and extracts from daily journals by prisoners, in their own words, about their learning experiences whilst in prison

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PRISON EDUCATION DIARIES

INTRODUCTION

This collection is produced by HM Prison Service in association with NIACE (The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education) following a joint initiative during 1997 Adult Learners Week.

Sometimes witty, occasionally poignant, it offers a unique insight into the thoughts and experiences of prison education and prison life from the prisoner's perspective. Contributions come from men and women prisoners and young offenders from various ethnic backgrounds from the following prisons:

HMP Blantyre House, Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Erlestoke, Everthorpe, Highpoint, Long Lartin, Manchester, Wakefield, Wolds, Woodhill, Winchester, Usk and HMP/YOI Bullwood Hall.

FOREWORD

by Ms Joyce Quin, Minister of State for Prison & Probation

Keeping people in custody is only part of what prisons do. Sooner or later almost everyone who goes into prison comes out again: the fundamental job for prisons is to make sure that, when people come out they should be less likely to offend again. In order to achieve this, the Government made a commitment in its Manifesto to provide positive and constructive regimes for prisoners and education is an important key.

Prison culture talks about prisoners being "inside" and life out of prison "outside", but we can also see it the other way round: offenders are the outsiders and law abiding people the insiders. The challenge for prisons is how to bring prisoners back into the community - physically, of course, but intellectually and emotionally as well. An ex-offender who can feel that he has gained or regained a stake in society, and counts for something, will be much less likely to reoffend.

Inability to relate to others and society may have a variety of causes. For example, a large proportion of offenders are people who have missed out in their schooling - nearly 60% of prisoners have poor literacy skills and communication and 75% of prisoners have poor numeracy skills. It is undoubtedly the case that lack of formal education can be one cause, and teaching prisoners basic educational skills will contribute to reducing offending. An offender who can read and write will have a much better chance of getting a job and staying away from crime, and he or she will no longer have to bear the stigma of illiteracy. Prison can provide a stable and well regulated environment in which education deficits can be addressed. Providing appropriate education for prisoners has to be a priority.

Education in prisons can help others too. Readers will find in this collection many contributions which are well and thoughtfully written. Moreover, learning brings a sense of achievement and self-worth; this has clear implications for the society to which the prisoner returns. Prison is, in many cases, necessary, but it isolates. Isolation can heighten the sense of detachment from society. Education helps to combat isolation and is vital in creating a positive and changed attitude and behaviour.

This is an encouraging book which shows just how much can be achieved in prisons. I hope you enjoy reading it.

June 1998

REFLECTION OF SOCIETY

Young guy in jeans leaned against a lamp
Stood and stared contemptuously down on a mad old tramp
Drank from a bottle and chewed some gum
He said "hey old man do you want some"
"Wouldn't mind a drink son" came a polite reply
"Seems such a long time son, my mouth's gone dry".
Lying in the doorway of a Soho porno club
Knew the young dude was just another snub
Needed a drink it was Saturday night
He remembered the platoon that lost the fight
"A drink is what I need son just to put things right".
The young man laughed and sneered in hate
"Hey pop has your head gone Jesus what a state."
"I was in the army son I know this is a disgrace
Fighting for my country son they've kicked me in the face
I fought with my heart son, fought with my soul
Now I'm another old vagrant son signing on the dole
Played hopscotch on the minefields son, tripped on tripwire
I still hear the sounds son of machine gun fire."
The dude laughed louder said "who gives a damn
For a sad old soldier with only one arm."
"I still hear the children son scream in soundless contortion
Do you know what I'm saying son war is a grotesque abortion
So buy me a drink son to celebrate Armistice day
Peace is what we need son what we need today."
And the young punk kicked him and walked away.

IN MEMORY OF A WAR VETERAN

AN EASY OPTION FULL OF SKIVERS.....

What have I learnt in education ?

In the short time I have been on education I have learnt that politics even in prison is the most important factor. The general prison population think *"What an easy option full of skivers"*. This could be true of some, but in the silent order of the classrooms there are vast numbers of people trying to better themselves. Selfish? maybe, but if not for yourself, nothing will change. If nothing changes then we will rearrive on the street with the same ambitions we had before. Education offers a different approach where we are challenged into finding new interests or improving old ones. Give us a chance and sometimes we will surprise you and ourselves. Keep the mind active and make us think or slide back into "old ways", I know which I prefer but it is assured that Education can continue or is to be left to fester because the system views it as a *"soft"* option.

ANYWAY, WHAT DID I WANT WITH A COMPUTER

One day I was asked, if I would like to write something about computers and what I had learned from the computer class here. Well first I must go back to how it all started.

I am a radio ham, and at that time I was using RTTY (teleprinter over the air) it was a big machine and made a lot of noise this would be in 1980.

Well other operators kept on about that my machine was slow and that my machine did not have all the keys that a computer had got and why didn't I get one.

Well at first I thought computers was too complicated for me and anyway what did I want with a computer.

Well one day I had gone round my friend's station and he said try my computer on teletype(rtty) it was a BBC MASTER.

Well I called some of my friends on the air and found how easy it was AND I GOT BITTEN with the computer bug.

I then decided that I should have one of these computer things which I did a week later, I then got the necessary things to connect it up like modem and cables and the right type of eproms and with the help of my friends got it up and running and connected to my radio and call a few friends on air it was amazing it was a lot easer and there was a lot more things I could do. I could put things into memory like station names etc. I could write out what I wanted to say and send it later spelt correctly it was marvellous.

but what was also happening was that I was also looking in the book and reading how to run the computer and was trying it out but some times I would be working away and wonder what the time was and find it was about 4am I had been working through the night, so it was baggy eyes in the morning.

Well I knew that I had to change computers as the acorn computer company was going bust and that the PC was the road to travel.

Well I was given the chance to come on the computer course here but it was not like when I taught-myself and there was a lot of holes in my learnings so it was start all over again to new equipment and different ways of going about things.

I seemed to type for miles and miles and press the wrong buttons and lose the lot as you had forgotten to save it and then you would have the instructor say you had done it all wrong do it again so it was "back to the drawing board"

We started to get wordprocessing right and did a test for it and passed then we progressed to spreadsheet which when you pressed total and found you had got it all wrong it was back to the drawing board and do it again until you got it right.

From there we moved to doing data and that started me off against you had to remember where you put things and where to find things slowly I learned how to do it right.

Then we had Desk Top Publication to learn and that had problems with it as you had to get the size of the print right so that you could fit it in the page and get the picture in the right place.

From there we had graphic to do pie charts and bar charts showing how much it look in a round disc, and bar charts in columns and when we got that right we had test to prove that we could do it all we then started paint brush.

A LESSON FROM A FOOL

In here you are in the ideal situation,
To get yourself, some needed education.
You keep your body fit on the field,
Do the same to your mind with a Guild.

I hear you cry 'what's the use',
But this is a very feeble excuse.
I don't care lay back on your bed,
Become another silly bloody blockhead.

Listen to ones who never want to learn,
Then it is odds on, one you will return.
Get your arse off that bed,
Get some knowledge in your head instead.

Take lessons for this fool,
I felt cool to bunk off school.
None of you are really my concern,
But it took me 59 years to learn.

You have your chance today,
On your future, you have your own say.
Don't care if others think you're a snook,
You can change your life with a book.

THE LIGHT OF EDUCATION

You present that all is alright,
Even though you are not too bright.
Seems my life only started to begin,
When I let the light of education in.

My life became a whole lot better,
When I could sit and pen a letter.
What to do, with this now, not quite sure,
I was younger, it would open many a door.

I feel my life is now better anyway,
This is something they cannot take away.
I have so much more confidence,
I'll show proof, learning is good, I'm the evidence.

I could never put my feelings on paper,
I bottled them up, this way is much safer.
A 50 year stammer, I've almost overcome,
I don't look back, I look at what I have become.

A SILLY OLD BUFFER

Since I was a young boy, I've been a joke,
My stammer, stood me out from other folk.
It is sad but, the old and young can be cruel,
I got sent away, for hardly ever attending school.

In here I could have laid on my bed,
Then let the loud music fill my head,
I chose to get some education instead,
I now understand, the words I've read.

This I could have never done before,
If I can do it, you can achieve even more.
If you really listen, to your teacher or tutor,
The future is, learning the use of a computer.

I found a hunger, I had to read and write,
To satisfy my own minds burning appetite.
Like me, if you find education, then I am sure,
You will want to keep coming back for more.

Those who shout loudest, I have found,
That empty vessel make the most sound.
There is no pride in having an empty head,
Fill it will a cargo of knowledge instead.

61 years old, I can take pride in what I can now do,
You'll make mistakes, they will get less, I promise you.
The ridicule of not knowing, I no longer have to suffer,
Don't you think this is pretty good, for an silly old buffer.

MY FIRST WEEK IN EDUCATION

I have been in Prison since 1991 and have been trying to get into Education since then. First, at Dartmoor, they said I was doing too long and put me into Metal Fabrication, where I stayed for 3 years and feel it was a waste of time for me. They made gates and I learned nothing.

Coming to Channings Wood six months ago, I tried again to get on Education but they said I had to work in a workshop first and then apply again. I really wanted to do the Business Studies Course and Computers, because my family have their own business and they are willing to employ me. I applied to get on to the 'Drug Free' wing and have been there since but I soon found that this was the wrong description, it was really dealing with behaviour problems which I do not have.

My time for release was getting nearer and I wanted to do something good for my future. I recently tried to get on to Education and Chris Brimcombe was kind enough to make efforts to get me on the Business Start-up Course. Now I've been given a chance to do a business course which ends in December which is the same time as my last parole date.

When I was in School I wasn't interested and didn't really do well, never really tried. The first day in Education at Channings Wood was a BUZZ, it felt so good. I messed up in school so I'm doing my best to make up for it and my mind is always occupied. In the day I'm in the classroom and at night I'm doing my homework and I'm really thinking about the goals I've set for when I get released. Everyone around me in the class is very positive about the future.

Our teacher, Ted, is a good teacher and does a good job, the atmosphere is really good. I really think that education is really important in prisons. It's one of the reasons that people are inside, because they've had no education. It's very important for prisoners to do something positive with their time in prison and you can't say education isn't positive. There should be MORE education!

Thank you.

THE TURNING POINT IN MY SENTENCE

I am now 44 years old and I have been here at Channings Wood since November 1995, serving a four year sentence. My parole date is approaching and I am working hard to gain that privilege.

I started at the Education department in January 1996 entering the woodwork room, part of the Arts and Crafts section of the department. This was natural draw for me as I have been interested in working with wood all my life. Shortly after, the tutor, Mr D Garrood introduced a S.W.A.F (South West Access Federation) course in woodcraft which I enrolled on. This course became the turning point in my sentence, it lasts for approximately 20 weeks and covers the basics of working wood with a craft perspective. I have successfully completed this course and it has already become invaluable to me, as it has enabled me to obtain a place at Cornwall College, where I will start on my release, parole permitting. I have lived in Cornwall since 1973.

As I have been with the department for quite a long time I have seen a few changes, mostly brought about by the reduction of the education budget. The policy here is that each student undertakes two sessions a week of what is called an enrichment subject. When I first started my choice was music, this was mostly music appreciation and in my opinion the tutor made the lessons enjoyable, as I personally enjoy many kinds of music. We lost this option when the budget was cut.

Another manifestation of the cuts was a reduction of the teaching hours resulting in a 15 minute reduction of our time in the workshop per day, this may not sound like a lot, but add it up over the 20 weeks needed to complete the course.

I became the workshop 'orderly' after I completed my course and remained there until the 4th of July 1997. I am now attempting the RSA 'Firm Start' certificate, a preparation for self-employment, which I hope to be using after my chosen courses at College. So far I have found this course to be extremely interesting. I have also taken

advantage of the evening classes held here and become computer literate, which is something I always believed was totally beyond me! This reminds me of yet another cut. We used to enjoy evening classes two days a week, now reduced to one. I must correct myself here as the classes are now back to two days, this has only been brought about by splitting the classes available over two nights. However, at the moment these are suspended until September, which I believe is a budgetary consideration.

I have developed good relationships with all staff members that I have had contact with and I think that they all put a lot of work into making the Education Department what it is - this is borne out by the fact that there are waiting lists for most if not all of the courses held, regardless of the fact that the 'wages' are the lowest in the prison.

I feel that I must commend the second workshop tutor, Mr M Pollard, who, using his own time, collects, from a furniture manufacturer what they call 'offcuts' which to us are extremely usable pieces of timber, without this effort the workshop budget would be stretched to breaking point with even more alacrity than it is anyway. Also I would like to express my gratitude to Mr C Brimecombe, Mr D Garrood and Mrs D Ashbrook who have all found time to help me through a personal crisis.

All in all, I believe that the Education Department has played a greater part in my rehabilitation than any other aspect of my prison sentence, and if I am the only one able to say this I would be very, very surprised.

I hope the Labour Government will do something to reverse the trend, created by the Conservatives, which is reducing the ability, nation-wide the ability of all Education Departments to play their part in the reduction of the numbers of inmates reoffending.

Thank you very much for expressing an interest in hearing my views and taking the time to read them.

AN OASIS OF SERENITY

The Education department is an oasis of sanity in the craziness of prison life. I've been on full-time education here now for nearly three months. The previous three months I spent in the tailoring workshop, sewing blue jeans - it was a nightmare, like being in a communist labour camp.

My day starts when my alarm goes off at 6 a.m even though they don't unlock us for breakfast until 8 a.m. I love the early hours of the morning. I wash and get dressed, and spend ten minutes saying prayers for my wife, who's in prison in Staffordshire, three hundred miles away. The I spend the next hour writing her a long letter. Thank God, she gets home in a fortnight, and I'll be able to speak to her on the phone every evening. The I shall use that hour every morning to write my best-seller.

After breakfast, we're let out at 8.30 a.m. Because I am over 35, I'm allowed an hour at the gym, which is a great luxury. The gym is extremely well-equipped and the gym officers are among the best here, very friendly and helpful. They call you by your first name, which makes a huge difference. I do forty minutes of yoga, following by a hot shower, which leaves me feeling brilliant, mentally and physically.

The class I've been on is the Business Studies class, run by Ted Cocks. Ted is in my age group; we've both been in business and we both like rock'n'roll, so we speak the same language and get on very well. There are about a dozen of us on the course. The class-room is modern and well-equipped. For me the best thing about the course is the other guys on it -quite a collection of interesting, intelligent, articulate, witty, entertaining and amusing blokes -a loveable rogues' gallery! Ted is popular and well-liked; he runs the course with a light touch, just the right mixture of humour and tolerance. We have lively and sometimes quite heated debates on a wide variety of topics. Each of us is developing a viable business plan for implementation on release, so that we don't have to revert to crime and end up inside again; car restoration, pottery, fitness training and the construction business are

among the various schemes. We've had a lot of fun working together on business projects and presenting business plans. I think we'll all remember Ted's class with affection for the rest of our lives; it's been a powerful bonding experience. I reckon at least a couple of us will end up as millionaires; we'll be able to keep Ted in his old age!

We break at 11.30 a.m for lunch, after which I say prayers for my kids, read my mail and take a short nap. We're unlocked again at 1.30 p.m for the afternoon session. On Wednesday I play cricket; I'm the captain of the prison cricket team, which is a great honour. We've won our two matches so far this season; on the other days we have practice games. There are a number of very talented players and the competition is fierce; there's always a lot of laughter and good companionship. The playing field and the equipment are of an extremely high quality. With a family of buzzards wheeling overhead on a perfect summer's day in this heavenly corner of South Devon, for a couple of hours you can completely forget that you are in prison - it's a wonderful escape.

On Tuesday afternoons we have time off to exchange our clothing and do our weekly shopping at the canteen. On Thursdays I usually get a visit from my teenage kids, occasionally my Mum and Dad; we binge on hot chocolate and have a happy chat. On the other afternoons we have access to the computer room, which is well-equipped with plenty of excellent machines. The computers are supervised by Theresa Mitchell, who is very knowledgeable on the subject. Thanks to her expertise, I have been able to become a much more sophisticated computer user, familiar with Windows, word-processing and spread-sheets. This has brought my computer skills up-to-date; more importantly, I have achieved a long-held ambition to learn to touch-type, thanks to a splendid programme called Mavis Beacon. I can now manage about 20 words per minute. My wife is also studying with Mavis at her prison!

The overall result of my time on the course has been to assist me to define more clearly exactly what it is that I want to do in the future. The answer for me is that I want to write, learning to touch-type properly has been an important first step towards becoming a professional writer. At the beginning of this week, the Education Co-

ordinator, Chris Brimacombe, very kindly assigned me to what is know as Private Study, so that I can now focus full-time on my writing, one of the few careers that one can actually start while still in prison! I am extremely grateful to Chris and his team for providing me with sanctuary in the education department and giving me the chance to do something truly constructive with my time inside.

During the last few weeks, I have already had several articles published by prison-related magazines and I have been commissioned to review a book for another journal. I've had encouraging feed-back from people who've enjoyed reading my stuff. Now I've been asked to write this piece; and I have as whole list of writing projects ahead of me, including a book. I'm genuinely pleased at the way things have worked out and thankful that my time in prison has given me the opportunity to focus more on this aspect of life. I may be in prison, but the future looks very bright.

On a general note, I would like to see a tremendous expansion in the role of education in prisons. I would like to see a change in public attitudes whereby people are sent to prison, when necessary, not for punishment but for education. The loss of one's freedom is enough of a punishment, believe me. As they say, people should be sent to prison *as* punishment, not *for* punishment. Education is the most valuable thing that one can do for people inside. At the moment, only about ten percent of prisoners here are lucky enough to be on education, and even that is threatened by further cut-backs.

There is so much that we could be doing for people in prison. My feeling is that we should focus on life-skills. I would encourage inmates to take up yoga, to teach themselves self-control and healthy habits. To help them further to address their addictive behaviour, prisoners should be strongly induced to give up smoking tobacco, the most widespread addiction in prison. Healthy eating habits should be taught, in conjunction with improvements to the prison diet. An enormous amount could be done to make prisons self-supporting by schemes to promote organic gardening and farming, giving inmates really useful skills to help them feed themselves properly in the future. In conjunction with encounter groups, co-counselling programmes could be established, so that prisoners could receive some real

therapy and graduate with valuable counselling skills for work on release. Meditation could be taught to help deal with the stresses and strains of prison life - and for life on the outside! Remedial work on basic literacy and numeracy should definitely be continued, combined with a wide range of vocational training course. We are limited in what we can do for people only by our imagination!

Prison is sometimes referred to jokingly as the university of life. But prison could indeed be a real University of Life. Education is the key.

"THREE PARAGRAPHS" - I

This morning, arrived at class at 8.30 first did imperial measurements Sheet 9

I found IMP 9 was more easier than 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, think I found them easier because I had done all the other sheets which gave me more practice in measuring. I also went to the library this morning but I could not find any books that was good for me but I don't like reading anyway so I find books in the library that I can draw pictures out of.

For the rest of the morning in the class we all had a quiz and played space invaders went back to the wing at 11.30

I feel I have achieved quite a lot so far in education it has made my brain work again in maths and writing and also concentrating on things I fell back on.

I also quite enjoy education as 2 days a week I do cookery so it give me the chance to do something a bit different.

At the moment the maths I am doing is just right so I feel there is no need to move on to harder maths yet.

As soon as I do I feel long multiplication would do me good.

nouns

(1) 5 things smaller than a match box

(1) pin (2) rubber (3) pebble (4) pen lid (5) pencil sharpener

(2) (1) slug (2) snail (3) worm (4) nit (5) wasp (6) beetle (7) butterfly (8) stick insect (9) mole (10) reindeer

(3) treats sick (doctor) write for papers (journalist) investigates crime (policeman) takes bets (bookey) plans buildings (architect) ride horses in races (jockey) studies the stars (astrologist) flies an aeroplane (pilot) astronomer

"THREE PARAGRAPHS" - II

What done this morning was, postage rates, insurance form and started a British Rail complaints form.

(Postage rates) It was about how much it would cost to send letters and postcards to different countries.

(Insurance claim form) How to fill in an Insurance claim form for a motor car accident details

(British Rail complaints form) I read the sheet to get the idea on how to go about filling it in

I got on well with the first two tasks and found the British Rail a bit more difficult

So far I have done half of the tasks that I have been sent on level 1 word power.

I fell a bit puzzled as I have done most of this before

As I am dyslexic I find it hard as it's not what I was really hoping to do as I thought I would be doing more on my reading and spelling.

I would like to do more on my reading and spelling

I would like to be able to read, write and spell a lot better than I can now.

B

1) pin, match, pound coin, pea, grass seeds

2) trees, plants, man, dogs, cats, flowers, germs, worms, lether jackets and chafy grubs

3) Doctor, journalist, CID, bookey, arkeytect, jocky, astromaner, piolet

4) desert, tanker, logde, form, den, holts, ambuance, unemomater

"THREE PARAGRAPHS" - III

A.

This morning I was working on the computer. I on yes chancellor when cutting on government spendings.

B.

I have achieved a lot in this class my spelling has improved a lot

C.

I will like to finish any number Power 2

B.

Fly earring bee pea bean

men woman pig cat dog cow horse

sheep lamb bull

doctor, reporter, policeman, bookmaker, architect, jocky

astrologer piolet

beach container, lodge, form, den, hots, ambulance, thermometer

B.

1. pin, drawing pin, watch battery, pencil sharpener, 5 pence piece
2. man, woman, cat, dog, bird, rabbit, mouse, mole, horse, cow
3. doctor, journalist, police, bookie, jockey, pilot, astromoner, architect
4. Beach, tanker, lodge, warren, den, holt, ambulance, thermometer

A.

I was working on my word power level one. The tasks I did were looking for adverts in the yellow pages for TV, radio and video rentals.

I've achieved the knowledge of apostrophes and commas. I still feel unsure about them because they are hard to learn and I'm still not 100% good at them

"THREE PARAGRAPHS" - V

A.

paragraph 1: this morning I was doing maths it was multiplication of decimals I think I was doing really good because I got all of them right

paragraph 2: about a few weeks back I didn't even know how to add up and now I can do multiplication and division and percentages I am really enjoying what I am doing

paragraph 3: I would like to improve my writing reading and do more maths classes

Nouns B

(1) pin, beetal, maggt, bombolbee, fingernail

(2) Cows, cats, dogs, humans, tigers

(3) doctor, journalist, police, bookie, jokie, pilot, astromoner, architect

(4) beach, tanker, lodge, warren, den, holt

THE WEEK MY CHALLENGE WAS WON

WEEKLY DIARY

SUNDAY 2nd FEBRUARY

Unlocked at 8.00am. Today was different from all the others since my arrival here at Erlestoke. The grand opening of Destry Rides Again was performed by the True As Im Stood Ere Your Honour drama group this afternoon. Proud to be a part of the cast. Forced breakfast down as needed to keep up strength.

Friends and family came up to visit and made up the audience along with other inmates. Buffet in visits room. Found it hard to relax, plenty of adrenalin flowing. Did not eat much, too excited and nervous. Smoked heavily! Chapel acted as the theatre for our productions. Felt part of the team for the first time today. We were all very enthusiastic though beginning to question our ability and talent. Girls were very supportive, helpful and very professional; full of praise for every line sung. Performance went quite well, room for improvement. Audience seemed impressed with acting and stage set.

Personal feelings: Achievements, self satisfaction and the willpower to want to succeed at something I enjoy doing, working within a team and as a unit. Paul rather disappointed, though optimistic for rest of the week. I will sleep well tonight, have already gone over lines and sung happily to myself. Feel relaxed again. Tomorrow will be much better!

MONDAY 3rd FEBRUARY

Beginning of new week, back to work today. Spent most of morning arranging final parts of business plan for the Princes Trust. I am pleased with the workload completed and optimistic in gaining help from PT.

Afternoon spent in chapel after usual daily routine of bang up for an hour after lunch. Morale was high amongst members of the cast. Paul

Butler, the director, in good spirits. However he stressed the need for a more focused attitude on a couple of the songs. Not Guilty (act 1) coming along well, tenors need to be a little stronger. Encouragement from everyone all round.

Had a light tea, still didn't have much of an appetite.

Returned to chapel for show. Air of anxiety filled the room. Nerves were high, nail biting was at the top of my agenda. Girls looked lovely, full of enthusiasm, very professional. Member of general public made up the audience.

Unfortunately show was rather a flop. Disappointment overcame all backstage. Certain lines were erased, members of the cast missed their cues at times. Rather a shame after all the hard work we had all put in. We deserved better! Paul, unimpressed. Tomorrow had to be a success for all, confidence builder. Perhaps the audience had not noticed the mistakes? They seemed quite impressed anyway.

Returned to the wing feeling rather low and exhausted. Heat from the lighting was a factor in this. Room was very warm. Gave myself a rest from rehearsing tonight, perhaps I was trying too hard. Show had drained my energy so it could wait until tomorrow!

TUESDAY 4th FEBRUARY

Awoke with vivid thoughts of last night's performance. Had lazy morning as the cast were given morning off. Looking forward to tonight, felt more relaxed today. Play had taken over my life this past week or so. Became obsessed with perfection.

Went rugby training this afternoon. Needed a break from rehearsals. If it was not right now then it will never be. Cast needed to relax. Calmness was required.

Returned to chapel after tea. Appetite was returning. Tonight I could feel the performance would be good. There would be no chance of complacency setting in tonight. I was right! An excellent performance followed. Girls were fantastic. Men's egos had been boosted. Everyone was ecstatic.

We had given our all, it had paid off. Paul was very happy. Audience were thrilled. After ten minutes of jubilation we were hustled back to our respective wings, rather a blot on the evening's performance. Officers showed no emotion. Still it's just a job to them. I had a great feeling of satisfaction in a job well done tonight as did the rest of the cast.

WEDNESDAY 5th FEBRUARY

Had another rather lazy morning, no work again. Played cards with Steve, time flew by. Saw probation early afternoon to arrange home leave dates. Meeting went well, informed that leave had been granted for a month's time. Felt good inside, was on a high after receiving this good news.

Attended rehearsal late afternoon. Again went over several songs and dialogue. Paul tries to change one or two scenes though really to no avail. It's now too late for changes. Everyone knows their respective lines and cues, been drilled in. Any major changes would be a key to disaster.

Again returned to chapel after forcing down tea rather hurriedly. Mood was different tonight. Everyone filled with happiness, confidence was high. Jokes, chit chat exchanged with the girls. Brief rehearsal before show. Again audience was a full house. Performance lacked the umph of the night before. Felt dead in places. Got off to a bad start. Songs far from perfection. What went wrong? Too much complacency, nerves had been restored. After all I'm told people perform better when a little nervous. General feeling of disappointment. Strangely enough audience seemed to enjoy it. Again we all knew what the problem was. Rather like a kind of telepathy between us all.

Returned to wing and the isolation of my cell feeling somewhat disappointed in myself. I knew we could do so much better, as did Paul and the rest of the cast. We had already proved it the previous night.

THURSDAY 6th FEBRUARY

Enjoyed a lie in this morning, after all it's not every week I get a morning off work. One of the perks of being envolved with the drama group. Used the time to relax my body and mind. Very important to be one hundred per cent alert as to whats going on whilst on stage.

Visited chapel in the afternoon. No rehearsal today. Participated in game of trivial pursuit and general chit chat with members of the cast. Paul already looking at parts for next play, The Bakers Wife. Everyone seemed happy. It was a good escape for the afternoon. Time to relax and be ones self.

Returned to the chapel at 5.15pm. Tonight's performance had to be the best ever as we were honoured with the presence of the Rose Bowl adjudicators. Nerves had returned fully to all. Everyone including the girls were on edge. After a brief warmup our real test lay ahead. We were all confident and determined to be a success.

Wow! what a show, the best to date. Had a great audience. Felt they were hinged on every word awaiting our reactions. Congratulations exchanged between us all. Thanks from members of the audience. All thrilled and excited, what an achievement. Paul wearing a smile of a cheshire cat. Rose Bowl adjudicators seemed very impressed. Joy and happiness felt by all.

Returned to wing feeling happy with myself. We had finally achieved near on perfection for a group of amateurs. Remained on a high for rest of evening. Wound down slowly taking time to reminisce over the evening's activities. At times like these one forgets one is in prison!

FRIDAY 7th FEBRUARY

Slept well! Awoke feeling refreshed and pleased with myself. Spent ten pounds at canteen, purchased weekly supply of tobacco and phone cards. Again had relaxing though rather laborious morning. Looked forward to tonight's performance. Small rehearsal in the afternoon. Not much done. Everyone still on an incredibly high note following previous performance. We were achieving our goal to near perfection.

Returned to chapel after an enjoyable tea. Appetite had returned, though felt rather bloated. Girls issued men with good luck cards. My personal collection serves as a souvenir and reminder of a most enjoyable week. Photos taken by Paul, followed by a brief warm up of the vocal chords. Performance rather good. Plenty of enthusiasm, though lacked something. Touch of complacency had set in again. Audience seemed impressed, congratulations had gone quite well, but could tomorrow be the best of all?

SATURDAY 8th FEBRUARY

Did not sleep very well. Morning was a time of mixed emotion. Went to church service as per usual. Returned feeling content. Received visit from friends in the afternoon. Caught up with domestic gossip. Felt relaxed, enjoyed myself.

Back to wing for tea, suffered lack of appetite again. Nerves started to arrive. Feeling of sadness overran body at thought of this our final performance. Strolled over to chapel trying to be calm. Air of mixed emotion filled the room. I was not alone! Time spent on photos again. Girls looked lovely as ever. Viv especially full of support. Had all become friends and part of a team together. Brief tune up with the vocals, everyone gave their all. Could feel that tonight was our night, the epitamy of all the hard work involved.

Absolutely brilliant! Best ever performance. Had reached our goal. Efforts had paid off. Cast in exuberant mood when final curtain went up. Extra scene for Paul who was rather stunned by it all. Dancing followed, whole room felt alive. Everyone felt so excited and proud. Scenes of joy! Said goodbye to the girls, a sad moment. They had become part of us over the past few months. Very friendly, supportive and added that touch of elegance and glamour which would have eluded us.

Returned to wing feeling sad and sorry that the week was over. None of us wanted the week to end. Drama has been an escape from prison life for me. I was part of this happy event and the pleasure it brought to those involved and to members of the general public. Unfortunately, it is now back to the reality of prison life, though I can

actually feel satisfied and proud of myself for the first time in my life. What an experience, one I will never forget! My challenge has finally been won.

A COMPLETE NEW OUTLOOK

My name is Phil, I am 47 years old and I am serving a three and a half year sentence in HMP Winchester. When I arrived here I was very depressed, very down with life and I couldn't read or write properly. As soon as I came to Education which I had to pluck up courage to do because I was so worried about being in a class with other people, I immediately settled in and took to it like a duck takes to water and it has opened up a complete new outlook on life for me.

THURSDAY MORNING 12.12.96

Today I have been sounding out words, practising sounds and my tutor has suggested I keep a diary to put down my thoughts about adult learning. My wife when she came to see me noticed a hell of a change in my attitude and outlook on life. She wrote to me and said Phil you can do it. In the space of four months i come from reading simple books to James Bond and Sherlock Holmnes. When I'm reading it gives me great pleasure when I come to a difficult word and I am able to break it down into small sections and solve the word. It makes me happy and my life has changed. When I get out of here I'll be able to go for delivery work because I will be able to read my sheets. I was always playing truant at school and got mixed up with the wrong crowd. My dad moved around a lot so every time I went to a new school I fell further back. Prison has given me the opportunity to do what I've always wanted to do all my life. I really felt depressed when I couldn't read stories to my boys. I can now do all my own correspondence.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON 12.12.96

I work with Elaine on Thursday afternoons. She a dyslexia teacher. We have 20 minutes in another classroom doing 1:1 work, spellings usually. Elaine is pleased with my progress and I feel good when I am able to do the work she gives me.

FRIDAY 13.12.96

This afternoon I enjoyed doing a spelling test in Richard's class. My spelling is beginning to come together and I feel more confident now and I don't mind picking up a pen whereas before I just couldn't do it.

MONDAY 16.12.96

I've been reading John Creasey's THE TERROR TRAP over the weekend. It's difficult to read because there are some long words in it. I was proud to be able to read the word SUPERINTENDENT! This morning I've been learning more spellings. I had a list of 10 words and I had to look at each word, then cover it, then write it. I got 8 out of 10 the only ones wrong were Christmas and biscuit which are both difficult ones. I got them right the second time.

At weekends I lie in my cell and read my book and listen to tape recordings of me sounding out words and sounds. I then write these down on a sheet of paper. I read my book every day and in 4 months I've read about 10 books. They've become more difficult and enjoyable as I love breaking down big words. "Being able to read long sentences makes my sentence seem shorter."

MONDAY EVENING 16.12.96

I picked up a newspaper and was astounded when I was able to read paragraphs fluently and understand what I was reading. Until recently I would have looked at a paper and become despondent (my vocabulary has got so much better since I started reading).

TUESDAY 17.12.96

Today I've learnt what an adverb is. We had a discussion about life - I've never had any problems getting on with people in general and I know I have good communication skills. All my wives (3) have said that about me. I'm 47, I've been married 3 times, have 5 grandchildren, been halfway around the world, been there, seen it, done it. I've lived

life to the full and even though I'm banged up in here I'm still cheerful and take each day as it comes.

WEDNESDAY 18.12.96

Today we cooked a Christmas dinner in our cookery class. I've always liked cooking. I make very good sponges. I'm very fussy, I don't like living in scruffy surroundings. I keep my cell clean, tidy and respectable.

THURSDAY 19.12.96

We've eaten some chocolates our tutor brought in for us as it's nearly Christmas. Being in prison at Christmas is very depressing. I miss my family but I have to shut it off. I'll be watching TV on Christmas Day but in here it's just like any other day. There's no drink, no parties, no decorations and worst of all, no women! This will be my second Christmas here and I hope the last. It's hard to be banged up on New Year's Eve with all the parties and celebrations going on outside.

I've now discovered what adjectives are and I was delighted to find most of the work I did was correct. This really helps my self-esteem, knowing that I am moving forward with my studies. My teacher Elaine gave me the DUBLINERS by James Joyce which I am reading fluently. I'm so happy to be able to read it, I feel like a 15 year old boy! It's so exciting and enjoyable to feel like this.

YEA PHIL'S
WRITEN UN SPELLUN
IS GOOD
HE CAN DO
BANK OF ENGLAND-PROMISE-BEARER-UN-DEMAND
HE'S NOW LEARNING TO DO
CHIEF CASHIERS NAME

Sunday 2nd March '97

'Rest' day. Did usual 40 minutes of T'ai Chi - clear the mind and prepares you for work, in theory at least! Read through the next assigned chapters of my correspondence course on Sports Psychology. The texts are written in anything but straight forward language, so I have to keep reading the same paragraph several times to understand what they are trying to say. It has been slow going, but my first assignment was returned with an 82% grade, so it's not to bad. I've always been interested in the mind and body link!

Monday 3rd March '97

AM: Computer class this morning. Spent the time writing and typing up the research project I've had to do for GCSE Sociology, (on vocational Training courses and what, if any, effect they could have on possible reform). It's coming on pretty well and I'm more or less pleased with it. Once it's finished I have to begin work on the next project - for GCSE Welfare and Society. It's a good job I can type fairly fast!

(20 minutes Zazen meditation at dinner time)

PM: GCSE German class. Not many students in this so we get plenty of time and attention from the tutor. So far my reading and understanding of German is OK, but my writing of it needs work - German grammar is not funny!

(Gym this evening)

Tuesday 4th March '97

AM: Self-study period this morning - now I get to find out just how much of the text books I've understood in the Sports Psychology course I'm doing! I have to write a 1600 word essay, which for English would be no problem, but in this subject it's not that easy! Fortunately it deals with physiopsychological arousal and its control and

management, which is one of the areas that I 'specialise' in. Still got to write the essay though!

PM: This afternoon more self-study - only because the recent budget cuts meant the art tutor could no longer be employed! 'A' level Art & Crafts is the syllabus I'm following and at the moment the craft I've chosen is calligraphy which is new to me. At the moment I'm working on 8th century Irish Half-Uncial script, known as the 'Celtic Script'. It is my favourite because it's so versatile yet easy to read. Just wish my hands were steadier!

(Gym tonight)

Wednesday 5th March '97

AM: Social studies - now that I've finished the Sociology research project I've got to start the one for Welfare and Society. The tutor suggested one on how the New Right Market Driven polities have affected the public services within prison, Prison Officers, Education and Probation. It'll do for me! So I'm getting on with the work (more typing!!).

PM: Art & Craft again - the 'Celtic script' is coming along, slowly, but now I'm having trouble with the Versal letters getting them proportional to the main body script. But I'm getting better!

(Gym tonight)

Thursday 6th March '97

AM: Half hour Tai Chi before breakfast. Social Studies this morning, still working on the Welfare & Society project, luckily it can mostly be done from a participant observation view point, after nearly 12 years inside I think I know a bit about the changes inside during that time! It helps that the tutor goes over most of the maim points several times, so even I can get to grips with it.

PM: Art & Craft - finally! Getting the knack of Versals, though at times they look decidedly 'wonky', still, at least I can see the progress, well, sometimes I can see the progress! I think all the typing I've been doing lately hasn't helped my penmanship skills. I wasn't sure I'd enjoy doing the calligraphy, but the very precise nature of it is quite a challenge, and it certainly makes the time go by.

(Gym tonight)

Friday 7th March '97

AM & PM: No classes today, it's the day for CKS, canteen and the every important library! It has to be said that after all the studying it is sometimes a very pleasant relief just to read something crass, i.e. what used to be called pulp fiction, not taken very seriously! It fills time without taxing the brain!

House of Tai Chi tonight and then bed!

Saturday 8th March '97

AM: Spent the morning going over the rough draft of the essay I'm writing for my Sports Psychology course. It's got a long way to go yet but at least I can see the beginning of the shape of it emerging from my hand scrawled notes! Had a light dinner and performed Tai Chi for half an hour.

PM: Good visit with my fiance! Spent some of it talking about the Sports Psychology course! It's worming its way into every aspect of my life! Tonight I'll just do some more Tai Chi and go to bed.

End View: A fairly typical week - though I'm always surprised that reading what I've done never seems to capture the headaches I get doing it all!

"SEVEN LONELY DAYS?"

Monday 17th February '97

Someone said "You are never too old to learn" because if you learn more then you will be wiser. I like to learn English because this language is International for most people and nations use it to communicate each other. I like to learn Computer because this Hi-tech equipment becomes more important for the modern world.

However, I don't like myself for lacking of understanding well in the two subjects which I want to learn.

I am a foreigner who has another language as his mother tongue. Sometimes I don't understand Slang, Idiom or phrases and these bore me.

But I promise myself "Piseth try again, Piseth try again"

Tuesday 18th February '97

I woke up at 7.45 a.m. with a strong wind blowing outside my cell. When unlocking began at 8 o'clock my routine started by going to toilet where the other said "Good morning! and slopped out, shaved, cleaned my face and teeth, showered and bathed, got breakfast, went to gym for early bird exercise, applied for many activities on the second landing, prepared to work or to go to education and etc. between 9-9.30am

Rush hour day by day!

This morning my teacher pushed me to write something for intermediate level of English because last term I was unable to pass the exam.

But I had no feeling today

As you know, my dearest diary, there are many factor supporting when someone wants to write or not to and it depends on timing and emotion too

It is very hard for me to think about the difference between the two languages at the same time

I mean Eastern and Western ideas!

I forget the words "Don't think twice!"

Wednesday 19th February '97

It was a long bang up today and it was a training shut-down day for officers in this prison, HMP Long Lartin.

I had nothing to do just only kept myself in my cell. But something had happened when I stood behind the bar at nearly 10.00am.

Let me tell you, my dearest diary, the true story of "The Two Black Crows."

The biggest surprise of my life was when I looked through the window yesterday morning. It was a beautiful day with sunshine in a clear sky, no fog but still strong winds even though the heavy rain had stopped before I woke up.

There was a large sand pit containing rain water. The pit edge had green grass close to the Rugby field.

Suddenly two black-plumaged crows flew to that pit. They looked around and stooped their heads to drink water. One of them, the bigger one, surprised me when he jumped into the middle of the pit and used his wings to beat water up and down many times.

When he had finished bathing, he shook himself to clear the water off his body. The sun shone on his wings and reflected brightly.

I have never seen such a sight before in my life!

Have you ever imagined that crow can bathe?

My dearest diary!

Thursday 20th February '97

Some of my friends sent me a post card to remind me of my country and keep our friendship all the times. Sometimes times change but friends never change if they know each other well.

I remember one of my poem and I would like to use your space, my dearest diary, to record that poem **Forget-me-not** again.

The system made us into the prisoners,
And threw us into jails
I am inside the walls
You are outside the darkest hell
Ours is small business,
But the worst thing is,
Consciously or unconsciously
Having one's soul a prisoner

Most people are in this situation
Honourable hard-working people
Worth of being love as I love you
Are you still loving me?

We are in the same boat
The boat of fate
The fate of good and bad luck
Good for you, but bad for me

You and I have the same heart
When we watch the same moon
Then you see my heart
Do you still love me?

Friday 21st February '97

I received my pay slip for canteen yesterday. I like to call it "the Market" instead of canteen. We have a Canteen Rota for A-D wing. Sometimes in the morning, sometimes in the afternoon.

Same day but different time!

In one period in a rota system, we have three things to do, canteen, kit change and library. Every Friday I feel everybody seems to be very busy.

Big queue for canteen!

There is a lot of noise, talking, laughing and chatting between inmates or with the sellers who are the officers. It is very easy if the buyers prepare their lists of things to buy and give that list to officers to collect their needs. But it is often slow because if many people buy each item carefully. Everything they need is on the price list. We have our credit of earning on a computer account. We have no choice for cash.

It is the sub-culture in this place.

I like shopping and seeing the market place but this is minishop. We can't buy clothes, drink or alcohol because the rule does not permit that.

Same world but different place!

Saturday 22nd February '07

I slept well last night and woke up at 8 o'clock this morning. We will have Outside Association at 10.15am and at 2.20pm.

I stopped going to that after I moved to Bravo Wing in November last year I appreciate seeing the crowd of inmates walking, jogging, talking and playing football.

I am unable to hear what they are talking about because I only see them from my cell. In February it is still cold even though some Saturdays and Sundays have sunshine. A big field allows us to relax for only two days a week.

I also stopped doing my walk to and fro-meditation last year. I need fresh air but I can open my window to get it instead of going outside to face worse weather.

I hope when Spring comes may be I will change my mind.

At the same time it is changing every second!

Sunday 23rd February '97

I read some news about my country, lots of change are being made by the new government. But I would like to see at least three things improved in my own town. When I think about the first word for **"freedom"** inside this place, then I can see many real pictures of moving around without handcuffs but I'm still limited myself by the control system. It is an effective method to develop myself and grow up with more discipline than I had before.

How many gates allow me and the others to go through my first word?

The difference between human beings and animals is people think with wisdom or intellect, so do not treat any people who have made mistakes like Barbarians.

No iron chains, no handcuffs but there should be closer observation of inmates.

The second word after I think about freedom, it is the word **"Facility"** to make them and me stay here in their homes. However they must find themselves facing the "Home alone" emotion.

Most people live her under pressure and sometimes they get angry very rapidly and destroy something to vent their emotions.

The Psychology Unit and Hospital are the places to take care of them.

The last word which I would like to see in my home town is **"Education"** and I will shortly conclude by referring to the difference between human-being and animals in my second word.

Someone said "You are never too old to learn"

My class is taught by tutor in Long Lartin, the little candle light in the heart of England.

So I will be back to school tomorrow while the song "To Sir with Love" becomes silently echoing in my heart!

ENCOURAGED, NOT PUSHED

The beginning being the best place to start. Thoughts of previous education. At school years ago as a lad, my attitude was "There's always tomorrow to catch up in". Now, years later my attitude has matured to the more positive! "Today, is work day. Tomorrow is results day. Certificates mean job opportunities. So work, and no play, equals future success in gaining employment." And once in employment, then climb the ladder as far as I possibly can. Gaining confidence all the time. And achieve at least a reasonable successful career!

Meanwhile, here at Wakefield, I am doing part-time education and with every intention of going into full-time education in the near future. The facilities here are very good. And I am grateful of the fact that though we are encouraged, in our studies, we do not feel in any way pushed. Good selection of subjects available. Numeracy and also the Communications class are mandatory, which is only logical.

Other classes are optional, and we can choose which we wish to be placed on. Such as Map-skills, Cookery, Woodwork, and Discussion class. There are also evening classes available, for Languages, Art and Music. (The latter two being provided during day classes also). There are different methods of learning - from text books, group work, television programmes, as well as when the teacher gives individual tuition to each student. Class period time I find, to be about the right length, not too long and not too short in duration.

Given ones own drive, the department does provide excellent provision for the keen student to study and learn. Also, the staff attitude is clearly based on their desire to teach only, as there is never any slight or reference to the fact that we are convicted people. I find the teaching staff to be patient and helpful. The format in the classes is one of group-work and individual work. I have noticed and also appreciated, how the teachers where possible, also, try to tailor to a students own handicaps or problems as well.

For example, for a chap who is partially deaf the teachers all make sure that he always hears and understands a question. And in my own case, I have a lot of anxiety for my mother's health which, has

deteriorated quite a lot in the last few months, and just lately more seriously so. I find the teachers understanding, that although I have a lot on my mind, I still strive to work to the best of my intellectual ability! With a positive drive towards success academically, and towards future employment after my release. The general atmosphere in the education area is quite relaxed, and therefore very conducive to learning practicality.

MONDAY 10th February 1997 - Numeracy class. Session went well and I felt that usual progress was being made. Except that I feel invisible at times. But a chat with the teacher soon ironed out what was after all a misunderstanding on my part. And was happy about this. I quite enjoyed numeracy studies, and look forward to much more progress!

An observation I'd like to add is that years ago I used to hate maths, but nowadays I enjoy the subject. And I appreciate fully its importance in every day life certainly in regards of worthwhile future employment.

TUESDAY - Communications class. Went very well. Did two assignments which dealt with vocal communication, an area that I'm sometimes not too good in. Had to ask questions on football to another student, which is a subject that I'm not well up in, but that was the purpose of the assignment. The teacher said that we did very well, and also that my questions were intelligent and well thought out, which the other student answered very well. Fairly pleased with my work, but this area still needs more work on.

WEDNESDAY - Map skills. While not an essential subject, nevertheless it is a rather useful and interesting one. The class work together, for the first half of the session, and then in the second half we work on individual projects. For example I am working on a project on the country of Cheshire, which I also enjoy.

THURSDAY - Second Communications class of the week. We were asked by the tutor if anyone would be interested in doing some work on 'Learning diaries for prisons'. No one seemed to be, except myself. Normally I would be working on underpinning work and assignments. But I thought that work on this diary will be also useful in helping me with my communications studies as well as being an informative piece of work. So I set about this task on which I am now working. And I enjoy doing so. I look forward to completing this work and sending it off to the ALW team in Leicester.

FRIDAY - Discussion class. This week we watched a video about a young offenders institution. The first part was about life there in the seventies, and moved on to present day where two former residents went back to see the place as it is now. It was quite interesting, and afterwards the class discussed points and opinions on what we'd seen. It was interesting to debate, as we do on a current topic every week.

AN EDUCATION

A day in the life of a very average prisoner

1 January 1997

The first of January! The first thing I've decided is to make no New Year resolutions. That is my resolve. There's no point. What I resolve to do on Jan 1 is broken by Jan 2. So - no New Year Resolutions.

Sat thinking about this for a while. Realised I had broken the rule the instant I thought of it. Now - I wonder what kind of logic is this? - when you resolve not to make a resolution and yet is's a resolution in itself? Kind of paradox, isn't it? How can the brain arrive at a decision to decide not to make a decision? There must be a branch of mathematics in here.....or psychology. Maybe it's down to brain connections and logic paths. Resolve (doing it again!) to have a look at that sometime later in the year. Too convoluted to mix with the cornflakes.

No education today. The teaching brigade are treating their hangovers to a taste of the 'hair of the dog' - I call it 'the procrastination of alcoholics' - putting off a hangover until tomorrow that you needn't have had today.

This gives me a headache - just thinking about it. Today I - we - have to try and educate ourselves.

Decide - as I'm feeling logical - to concentrate on a bit of maths in my cell.

Started reading about this man Napier. Started down the route of Napier because someone mentioned calculus. The last time I heard about that was when I was having my teeth fixed by the dentist and I thought - I could avoid calculus maybe using maths and save myself a lot of pain having fillings. Thought this might be an example of applied maths.

Got quite a shock. Found this geezer Napier had come up with some idea that

$$dy/dx(e^x) = e^x$$

You're supposed, I gather, to say this as dee y be dee x of e to the x is e to the x. So what? So I went off and knocked up the only guy on the unit that seems to know these things and he said I had to start off with a geezer called Newton or more likely a bloke by the name of Leibnitz (one of these two having, apparently, discovered calculus). So I started to think how was it, that if calculus had been discovered three or four hundred years ago, dentists had only started to remove it and educate people about it in the last twenty or thirty years?

Then this guy told me that a bloke called Archimedes (some Greek cove who lived something like 500BC) would have discovered calculus about two thousand years before Newton (or Leibnitz). But he got killed just before he was about to discover it and that put maths back two millennia. There was, I thought, something philosophical about this.

So I knocked up the bloke who's doing maths and he looked phased when I said that far from wanting to get my teeth into calculus I wanted his help to use maths to keep my teeth clean and cut down visits to the dentist - the mathematics of health care. He asked me - not too politely - if I was stoned. Then he told me to go away (also not very politely) and banged shut the door of his cell.

So I kicked the door of the library bloke (he does the library for the whole prison and he used to teach maths or something) and he told me to tell him slowly what I was on about.

I said that my problem was calculus. And he said a lot of people had trouble with it.

So far, so good. This is what the other two guys had said. Then I said the dentist told me you could get calculus (not like 'flu or a cold, but through the teeth) and this could lead to tooth ache and fillings and even invade the rest of your bodily system. So I wanted to avoid it.

He reached up to a shelf and handed me a tube of toothpaste.

"This what you're after?" he asked.

They can be so stupid, these so-called intelligent people, can't they?

"Of course not," I said, probably not too politely. "I'm looking for a book on calculus", I said.

"Oh. You want to read it up?"

"Yes," I said, thinking what a prize berk he was. "Of *course* that's what I want."

"Well, I haven't got anything here. You'll have to wait 'til tomorrow when the library's open and look in the medical section," he said. "Or maybe biology," he added as an afterthought.

"I'd have though you'd have had a book in here I could borrow." He looked puzzled - that phased-eye stare again. "You being a maths wallah and all that," I explained.

A sine dawned in his eyes. I could see he was getting my drift.

'You mean C-A-L-C-U-L-U-S," he said, giving the word emphasis.

"Yes!"

"You do know they're not the same thing?" he asked, his eyebrows shooting up to the top of his head.

"What aren't?" I was beginning to get impatient. This was a subject I really wanted to know about.

"Calculus - "

"Calculus is calculus is - "

"No it isn't," he said

"Do you know what you're talking about?"

"I think I do. What are you asking me about?"

I felt like smashing his face in. "Calculus," I shouted

"Teeth?" he asked

"Bloody teeth," I confirmed.

"Come to the library tomorrow."

He started to close his cell door.

"But I want to read up the maths of calculus."

He gave me a hard look, straight in the eyes, looked around his cell, picked up a book, carried it over and thrust it into my hand.

"Look through that and give it back to me tomorrow," he said. "See how you get on and then ask someone from the education department if you get stuck. Best I can do."

He banged shut his cell door.

I felt I was being had somehow or another. Know what I mean?

Made a brew and opened the book.

Calculus. Several chapters. Introduction, differential....integral....all types of calculus. Slopes of lines. $dy/dx(2x^3) = 6x^2$.

Don't ask me to explain, but something started to get to me. It was like the sort of thing these people who come to the Chapel talk about - how they suddenly saw a glimmer of light because of some Almighty influence and this led to their lives being changed. That's how I felt. Something was happening in my mind - not like changing gear - more like finding another road with better scenery. Except there was some kind of logical beauty in this maths and I had to find it.

I thought about that for a while. The whole of our world is based on maths in some way. I've read that the universe is very mathematical - very logical - and very beautiful. Even the inconsistencies can be predicted within mathematical limits. But there is always more to find. Mathematics is a way of revealing ultimate reality - it offers a way forward for mankind. Discover the basis of the inter-relation and you must have the shape, history, time...everything. The origin of the universe, even. That's what I think, anyway.

I had to find out more. Where to start. I banged on the maths bloke's door again.

"You again?" he asked - even less politely than before. Stupid question, anyway. He could see it was me, I could see it was him. I'd seen him before. So I ignored his rhetorical question (which quite often means pointless statement) and said:

"Have you got a kind of general book on maths - really kind of what it's about. Know what I mean?"

He did. His eyes lit up, he swelled in importance, reached to a pile of books and, like a messenger bearing the nectar of the Gods, handed

me a well-thumbed, coffee-stained out-of-print edition of *Mathematics for the Million* written by Lancelot Hogben.

"Lose that and you've lost a leg," he said fondly. There are few more direct ways in which a person can convey attachment to an inanimate object.

I took it back to my cell feeling as if I'd won a prize, turned on Radio 3 for a bit of background music (Radio 3 is the best and most varied music programme in the world), settled down as comfortably as possible in the prison chair I'd won from the TV room, put my feet up on the bed and started to read.

Within just a few minutes the book started to open up new vistas, new perspectives of the world and I was lost in time and space. I hardly noticed the semi-gentle bump of the cell door and the smooth turn of the key at lunch-time lock-up, when we all sit down to be counted (one of four times a day).

I found myself thinking about all kinds of mathematical ways of examining everything around us, and what we might find out as a result. Standing in the food queue I wondered about the mathematics of queuing and the chance of getting what you wanted. If you were first in line were you more likely to get freshly cooked food than if you were at the back and had to wait for extras to be delivered which might be fresher than the food that had been delivered to the United for the beginning of the meal? Was there a way of predicting this?

Sat down to eat at a round table with six seats in fixed positions arranged around it. Why round? Was it a try at hexagonal close-packing? Was it to encourage discussion, reduce friction? No! It was to eliminate hard edges and stop people being killed through hard impact with a corner. Brain damage doesn't quite fit with the aims of a Unit devoted to educational purposes.

Couldn't wait to finish the food and get back to Hogben. Sat glued to the book and Radio 3 all afternoon. Again hardly notice being locked up for the evening.

Evening meal - joined by the chap who's just started a course in psychology. Now this is an area that *does* interest me a lot. He said he

was having trouble getting his head round dependent variables and independent variables.

The discussion went on for so long, everyone else finished eating and started getting geared up for the nightly spectrum of evening activities on offer - pool, video, TV, gym, game of cards, model making, reading, writing home, visits, 'phone calls....the rich panoply of prison life. (Mind you, we do far better here than most prisoners in other jails - according to the lads who've spent some time in them.)

Anyway, he pointed to the four-foot artificial tree which had been put up just before Christmas. I had a feeling he was going to use it as a talking point.

In fact, it had been used as a *talking*-point just after it was first put up. After a couple of nights, the lights on the tree were illuminating the greenery on the plastic branches, most of the ornaments having been taken (as Christmas decorations for people's cells.)

But, some kind of deal was struck, an amnesty was granted around evening curfew and the ornaments mysteriously reappeared. Even the star which had been at the top of the tree re-asserted its presence in imitation of the sudden manifestation of the Star of Bethlehem, now thought to have attracted attention around the September time of 1BC (or 1IBCE if you prefer "Before the Common Era").

"He", he said, meaning the would-by psychologist referring to the bloke who *is* a psychologist who comes in to teach him, "said the Christmas tree and the lights were a good example of dependent and independent variables."

"Rubbish," I said (or, rather, an eight-letter word which, in the vocabulary of the vernacular, is often applied to mean the same thing, but more disparagingly).

The emotion of surprise was expressed on his fact and with a sudden frozen posture in his torso - of momentary but memorable duration.

His face melted to a puzzled smile - the last frame of a sequence which spelled out an unspoken request for a response.

"The thing is, he's got it wrong," I started to explain. The smile disappeared; his face deepened to a puzzled frown. "It isn't the tree

per se that's the dependent variable, it's its *attraction* which is. The lights are an independent variable."

Light certainly wasn't dawning on his face, so understanding was not yet within his grasp.

"Try to think of it this way. The problem is in the use of the word variable. Think of something quite different and then we'll come back to the tree."

"Let's take an electric light bulb. Say it's a 40 watt pearl bulb. Unless you break it, it remains the same. But supposing you attach it to a mains supply of electricity and you put a rheostat (something which varies the current in the circuit by turning a handle or pushing a lever) in the circuit," (he nodded) "and you turn the current on, the bulb glows with light - yes?"

"Yes," he said, nodding a little harder.

"Okay, I can adjust the rheostat so the amount of current going into the bulb ranges from nothing (current switched off), through increasing amounts, making the filament glow dull red then brighter and brighter and brighter until the current is so heavy the bulb explodes."

"To be effective - as a source of illumination - the bulb is dependent upon the amount of electric current fed into it. Thus, the electric current is the independent variable (independent, in this case, of the bulb) and the effectiveness of the light bulb is the dependent variable (dependent upon the electric current)."

"So, the attractiveness of the Christmas tree is dependent upon the decorations and the tree lights, themselves dependent upon the electricity fed to them."

He still looked confused.

"Let's look at it this way. Suppose you drive a car - OK? I want to know what effect alcohol has on your ability to drive - right? So I observe your driving skill as it is without alcohol. Measure your reaction times, your ability to judge distances, and so on. Then I give you measured amounts of alcohol and test you each time, leaving a day or two between each test and matching the conditions each time."

"Your driving skill becomes dependent upon the amount of alcohol you take in. The alcohol can be varied from nothing to a massive intake. So - your driving skill is the dependent variable and the alcohol (varying quantities) the independent variable. OK?"

It was. He nodded, and a big smile gradually broadened across his face.

I felt pleased.

"I'll speak to your man when he comes in the morning. His example was misleading."

"Yes - it was," he agreed - confirming he now understood the difference between dependent and independent variables.

Went over to the Chapel, clutching a pile of music, including details of the songs they want to sing on Sunday, sent by the Methodist guy that comes in one afternoon a week to talk to new people (as far as possible, the predominantly C of E Chapel keeps other denominations below the visible horizon - the second Sunday after Christmas is, therefore, a favoured spot to slot in the Methodists). It is the time of year when people are at the lowest and certainly don't wan to be in any way reminded of Christmas or anything related to it. So - the turnout is not expected to be high.

Nonetheless, I feel it is my duty to put on as good a performance as possible for the guys that do come along.

A reasonable amount of money has been spent on the organ, and I enjoy being the official organise and able to play it when I want to. I play for all the services (CofE, Charismatic, Evangelistic, Methodist, Baptist, Salvation Army, Roman Catholic, 'Open' or 'VP'.....and there is much more involved than people might imagine. It is important to the people that come that it is right. If you know what you're doing, you can made the organ sound as if it's in a cathedral somewhere (which isn't bad for a fairly small, austere room with very little going for it otherwise), helping to transport people's minds away from the boring, hostile, overall unchanging but always isolational environment that prison is.

So, I set about taking a lot of trouble with the stop settings. A couple of the numbers (I do rather think of them that way - if I thought of them as hymns my mind would freeze up on the 'creative' aspect) had a kind of swing beat - a difficult thing to achieve with this organ, but I 'cracked it' after a while.

Went back to the Unit and read a bit more Hogben before applying Newton's Laws of Motion and a fair sprinkling of practical Euclidean geometry to the pool table. There seemed to be a slight problem in terms of angles and parallel surfaces. The angle at which the ball was deflected from one side of the table and then the opposite cushion was definitely *not* the same (although Euclidean geometry states that straight line drawn through parallel lines results in equal angles at both intersections). The spin (the rotational dynamics) of the ball obviously came into play. This means that the human brain is capable of solving (in a way that we are not aware of) a highly complex dynamic equation - and is able to predict, within limits, the outcome (i.e the outcome of a shot taken in pool, snooker or billiards). Furthermore, the brain is able to not only predict the approximate position of the cue ball when it comes to rest, but plan the next shot in advance, and *its* outcome!

This is such a complex problem, requiring the mental pre-iteration of an enormous number of variables towards an asymptotic optimum before a shot is taken, together with a need for a tremendous number of computations, that it is surprising we can play the game at all!

I pondered this for a while, sizing up the table before taking a shot. The visual data, the speed of the table, the lay of the cloth, the resilience of the cushions, the weight of the cues, the weight of the balls, their position....the ambient noise...the characteristics of the top of the cue.....The brain processes all this data and, acting on the information received, computes and presents the solution; we instruct the brain to adopt the stance and operate the cue action to achieve the result.

It seemed to me that it was at this point we tended to get it wrong. We needed to learn to physically achieve the operation required, and this could be influenced, yet again, by a further infusion of unnecessary data (whatever 'bet' or 'pride' might be riding on a shot, for example).

I don't suffer from 'pressure' shots because I am only interested in the problem presented by each shot and nothing else. The solution of the problem is the thing. Learning from getting it wrong is as important as getting it right. In fact, unless you are a person interested in repetitive tasks, life is constantly about the solution of new problems - the creative mind. I have no interest in repetitive tasks.

Decided to attempt to block the entrance to each pocket of the pool table with a yellow ball (the colour I was playing with). Managed to block four our of six pockets (one with two balls) and then, at the most convenient point in the game, potted the five balls one after the other. This seemed to unnerve my opponent for some reason that I find unaccountable. With a larger number of red balls on the table than I had yellow ones, he could have played a succession of snookers and (probably) win. Instead he tried very risqué shots and enabled me to win easily.

It was a game I hadn't played until seven weeks ago. It still presents a challenge.

I decided it was a social accomplishment, but only applicable in a social environment I was unlikely to find myself in.

Locked up for the night, turned my attention to Hogben again. Went to sleep contemplating the astronomical nous and constructional engineering know-how required to construct the Great Pyramid in such a way that one aperture always followed the path of a particular star.

DAFT TO WASTE ALL THE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE COLLECTED ISN'T IT?

HELLO MOTHER, HELLO FATHER
HERE I AM AT CAMP GRANADA
IT IS VERY ... ENTERTAINING ...
AND THEY SAY WE'LL HAVE SOME FUN
IF IT STOPS RAINING

++++++++++++

TAKE ME HOME OH MOTHER, FATHER

Letting my age slip a bit already, aren't I? Never mind, I am too old to bother about whether you know what period my favourite music came from (But not too old to bore you all with tales about the GOOD OLD DAYS).

Monday morning comes along, as it does now and then, and I have an English lesson to look forward to. The trouble is that I have already learned nearly all I came down to the education department to pick up on. I have creative writing as my objective on leaving prison and as I explained at the beginning of the year, on my enrolment, I just need to home up a bit on a few details. There is always more to learn, I would be the first to admit, but for me, the 'basics' are enough. (I now find myself with the small problem of getting my ideas past the teacher. Even worse than that though, past the course tutor, DUNCAN.)

My style of writing depends a lot on turning my own, and tales from other inmates, into stores that are interesting enough to read. "You must not write anything whatsoever to do with prison" I am told. 'SECURITY' being the magical word bandied about like a Union Jack at the last night of the proms.

One of the first casualties I had in that department was an article I did covering the different methods newspapers use covering the same story. 'KILLERS TO GO ON CRUISES' was the headline I used for my version of the 'Sun'. Leading the reader into believing that the Royal yacht was to be used by the Prison Service as a holiday cruise ship for cons. The other version was aimed more for the 'Times' type of

readership, this explained about the overcrowding in the prisons leading to having to hire a prison ship from the USA. The end of the article mentioned that the Royal yacht was to be replaced but details would be given at a later date. All very tongue-in-cheek, I thought, but the powers that be had other ideas.

The afternoon brings a little light relief. 'An insight into Sociology'. Sounds a bit stiff I know, but once you have got used to the different type of language they use, it can be a lot of fun. There is no right or wrong in this science, so we are led to believe, and this gives plenty of room to air views and opinions. It is alright in the classroom but you try telling the person doing your F75s that there are more than one view on things. They have beliefs about you that an earthquake cannot budge.

Tuesday, maths. What can I say to knock the lesson? Nothing at all really. I like maths. I can add, subtract, do graphs etc already, so the actual lesson is in fact just a refresher course. I have no inclination to take my limited knowledge any further and any bits of paper I receive are only worth putting on the back of the outhouse door. For school leavers, loads of bits of paper telling the world just how good they are, is an essential part of life, but please allow me this once to play on my age and say to you that a future employer is not interested in whether or not I have a GCSE in anything.

The afternoon, and I am getting nearer to what I really came down here to learn - the computer. I have a strong fascination for these machines, everyone should be brought up to be able to use them to their full advantage. (Something my generation never got the opportunity to do more's the pity.) The only snag today is that the dreaded DUNCAN takes the period. Once I manage to wheedle my way past him and find a corner to hide in I will be alright.

The period nearly went to plan, I just found out that a two page sci-fi story I wrote about a lad convincing two of his mates that outside of the prison walls there was nothing. The universe as we think of it does not exist. Everything we thought of as being our past is all programmed into us when we are produced at the gate. The guards do not go home, they are reprogrammed every night just to think they

have another existence. Get the gist of it? Anyway, BANNED. (Am I getting too near the truth or what?)

Wednesday morning and I have another English lesson. We are introduced into the poetry section of the GCSE syllabus. My knowledge on the subject goes as far as -The boy stood on the burning deck; or, there was a young lady from .... I explain to the teacher and am given some useful information and told that if I need any extra tuition then I only have to ask him, or Duncan, and they will do all they can. Contrary to what you may have been led to believe up to now, I am interested in learning, but like many other people do not like to admit to this weakness.

The afternoon and I am in good fettle. We have a room set aside for computers. They are very up to date and it is the sort of thing I have drooled over many times. I am in the process of doing a CLAIT course. (For beginners really but it is going in the right direction.) Never being in this position before, I am pleased to find that the lesson is being led by a woman. Janet is a wonder on the technical side of these machines. List most other people, I have always thought of womens interests only running as far as the typist type of thing. (I hope that does not come across as being sexist or dominating, because it is in no way meant like that.)

Thursday turning out to be quite a day. We had a study tutorial in the morning with the infamous Duncan. The full class sat round and we held a very informative discussion concerning our progress. One point which arose during the time, was concerning the amount of paper work which we are expected to fill in, over and above the work needed for the actual GCSEs. We have a grey folder to keep account of targets and accomplishments, and a blue folder concerning personal targets, aims and progress in that direction. Most of the students there agreed that our progress is solely based on the end results of the GCSE exams. We were told that everyone in the system (Education) has to do this exercise. Our argument against this was that if enough of the student population protest about this unnecessary paper work and are able to put forward a logical point that the time could be better spent on actually doing lessons inside the classroom as opposed to filling out pieces of paper. (Back to the

employer thing again) You can show him/her your certificates, but it is no good at all producing a folder showing how you progressed to NOT passing an exam.

The subject which I hear is the most unpopular in the education curriculum, is on the agenda this afternoon - European Studies. There are only six of us on this lessons and out of those, I think that there were only two who started off wanting to actually do the course. The others, like myself, were only there to fill in the time. (A lot of cajoling from Duncan about broadening my horizons, mixed with veiled threats about what could happen if I did not do the course, helped me come to the decision that I did.)

Like most other Brits, I have some strong views about Europe. They are over there. We are over here.

Since its conception in September, the lesson has changed my attitude about the European Community. Looking into the details a lot closer, I have found that for the ordinary man on the street, the only different between us is that we tend to speak different languages. I am still nowhere near a supporter of a United States of Europe, far from it, but I do now have a lot better insight into the running of a large community (and I just might now sit the exam at the end of the term. Daft to waste all the knowledge I have collected together, isn't it?)

The dreaded mock exam greets us Friday morning. Plenty of good natured bantering from the lads on the wing as we make our way down to the education block. Loads of joking between us taking it, as we laugh and giggle like a load of silly school boys, up until the time we come face to face with the heavily yellow painted boards in the corridor which announce 'SILENCE. EXAM IN PROGRESS'. What more can one say?

Time for lunch and the opportunity to change from my serious-study-head to the could-not-give-a-s**t one.

The afternoon is spent in the prison library. Plenty of time to do all the research that I need, not only for the educational side of my studying, but also for my writing. Come to think about it there is not all that much different, is there? Maybe Duncan was not all that far

out then at the beginning of term when he said that I need to generally broaden my horizons and that the education department was the best place to do it.

Still, I have now got all the weekend to get over this softening approach.

WAIT A MINUTE, IT'S STOPPED HAILING
GUYS OUT SWIMMING, GUYS OUT SAILING
PLAYING BASEBALL, HEY THAT'S BETTER
MOTHER, FATHER PLEASE DISREGARD THIS LETTER

Narratology or negative capability
I don't want to grow old
and be a victim of senility.

Metre, metaphor, simile or pun,
Important to me
And lots of fun.

I was raised in an orphanage,
Spent a long time at sea,
A silver fork novel
Now that will suit me.

Socratic, democratic
Pot boiler I'm not:
The critics might say
"He's just a time waster"
But I assure you, Sir
I'm not a poetaster.

I don't need the money
No reason to earn,
I just love the music
Of words that I learn.

There's not a lot,
To a book of fiction,
but give me the task,
In poetic diction.

The peroration is where I arrive
And with literary terms
I'll know I'll survive.

So remember one thing, my intelligent friend,
If ever you're stuck
Or ever in doubt
Reach for literary terms
And use words with some clout.

EDUCATION

I came to Highpoint Prison on the 26 November 1996. On the following Monday we were interviewed by the education. I decided to myself that it was about time that I got myself some kind of education. I am 25 years old and the last time I did any kind of learning was when I was 13. I was kicked out of school and never received any further education until now. I started education at Highpoint on the 11 November 1996. I've been attending English and Maths classes for four weeks to date. These lessons have been very useful to me. When I first started I was unable to construct a sentence and did not know about apostrophes. I've now learnt how to do these things which have been very useful for me. I have also learnt quite a lot in numeracy. I've only been on education for four weeks and in those four weeks I think I have done well as it was the first lessons since the age of 13. I think that the teachers and their way of teaching is very good. I also believe that if I work hard enough I can gain some sort of qualification at the end of it.

Why I decided to come to classes is because I want to learn to read, write and spell. I have been in this class for four months now and I have learnt to read and spell but I'm hoping to get good at my writing as my writing is not so good as yet. As for the group in the class they are all very good people to get on with, we all help each other in any way we can. The teachers are also very good, they also help in any way they can. One of the teachers is a bit of a nag but she is only doing it for my benefit. We get on well and that is the main thing. I will continue to do classes because, as I said, I want to learn and I'm here to do just that. I do think that I'm a good student, I get on with my work and I get on with the other people in the class and help in any way I can.

I'VE MASTERED PERCENTAGES

Before coming onto this class, I assumed it'd be just basic exercises that I didn't need to go back over. I originally applied to go on the computer course, but was told it was full at the moment. It was then suggested I should do some English and Maths to brush up first.

It's now six weeks since I started this class, in that time I can't believe how far I've come. There are no more than eight people in here at any one time, so it gives the teachers a better chance to get to know each of us personally and spend more individual time on any difficulties or problems we experience from time to time.

I now think I've mastered the style of percentages to a degree of being able to work out the percentage of any number. That's something I didn't understand how to do before, I could only work out 25, 50 and 75% of something. I have also done quite a bit of work on decimals and all other areas of maths thanks to Sheila.

My punctuation has also improved a great deal, thanks to Kate, she is also very good at what and how she teaches. I've been taught how to lay out a letter. I've been forced into the habit of checking over my completed work for spelling mistakes, full stops, capital letters etc. I've been greeted with a generous introduction to the delicacy of figurative language.

I've also done quite a lot on the computer and have now learnt a great deal in the use of some of the facilities it has. I can save work on a disc, I can even set the computer to save work I'm doing at regular intervals. I can print work now, type a lot faster and do basically a dozen other things I didn't know how to.

15 MILES TO MAIDSTONE

I am 17, I can't read, I can't write and I am in jail.

1979 My girlfriend came to see me today and she brought her little niece with her, Louise brought her peter and Jane book with her and wanted me to read it to her but I said that her mother would do that for her later, she said no and so threw a tantrum.

That's it - I've made up my mind, I must be able to read and write.

To day I had my board and they said that I would not have the ability to learn to read.

I went to see the education and they put me through a test and found me to have very little social skills and pore reading ability, This maid me feel terrified but she told me that she would put me on a private class for basic learners and would give me private lessons 1981 I spent every night on her class and all my spare time was spent sitting at the back of her other classes but getting on with my work' I would write page after page until I would get it right' Most of the time I thought that I would not get it right. Looking back on it now I can see that I wanted to do it but did not believe that I could do it.

Today I got my result, I passed my City & Guilds level one English, The feeling that I got put me on cloud. Nine and nothing could pull me down and it has given me belief in my self I am now going to carry on and do level 2, Maybe I would cope with a bit of math's

1982 I am now at Maidstone' To day I went to the Kitchen and spoke to Woody because I wanted to learn to cook, I was told that I would have to work from the bottom which was the wash up.

1995 I started NVQ level 2 in Catering and Hospitality in Downview Prison, The Assessor came to see me and told me that I did not need to do level one that he was putting me in at level two, That felt good, It's all up there but you have to believe in your self.

COURSE PROGRAM LAY OUT

I would work for the prison in the morning and or the afternoon in the Kitchen and the rest of my time would be spent on my course work I

was given a fitted kitchen on the wing to work in at night time till bang up, (meaning the end of the day). This is a typical week.

February 19th 1996

I got up today at 6am and went into the kitchen, first job of the day was to get the bread started and put the rolls in the oven before starting to get the breakfast ready for all four wings in the prison, this was done by 8,30 and then we start the dinner, at 12 noon, my working day stopped and study started, I had to write up the papers that I was going to do in the Kitchen on the 20th,

20th 1996

Today I was meant to go to the Kitchen but was told that I would have to stay on the wing for the morning and that the course work will be done in the afternoon so I so I used this time to do some of the theory work of which I have been given. I did get to do the cooking today and I think all went well but I have to wait for feed back from Sarah,.

21st 1996

I had my internal review board today and I really am glad that at last people are starting to see the change in me, I think that it as been the best board that I have ever had, They all feel that the course is going well and my boss is very happy with my work. Things are starting to look up but there is a long way to go if I am going to pass this, I think that the files that I have put together of my work are good so does Sarah, the Head Chef who trained me.

22nd 1996

Today I spent the first part of the day working on the bakers having to fill in for some one that has not turned in, Alan the manager has asked me to stay working for him till I move to Blantyre house, I have said yes. Over dinner Everton and Sarah had me in the office and was going over my work once again, she said that I had done well and would be telling the assessor the same in the morning, That was the

first I knew that he was coming, Everton has given me bites of paper to write up tonight.

23rd 1996

Well I did not get to sleep last night because by the time I got the work wrote up I did not want to go to sleep so I just went over the file again, The Assessor spent the first part of the morning with me in the office going over the theory then dinner time he had me cook a meal and Sarah said he even looked pleased. I PASSED THE NVQ LEVEL 2.

24th 1996

Today I never went into work but took the day off. I still can not believe that I have passed, Janet my case work officer is over the moon and has told me to keep going. I will until I reach the top.

May 1996

I am at Blantyre House, I decide to come hear because I new I could do my level 3 from hear'I went to see the Education officer today, He arranges attendance at the out side college two days a week'

October 1996

On the 30th I started at the college and all went well, The teacher went round the class and asked us who we were and what we had done and where we came from, when it got to me I told them I was in prison trying to make my life better but up until 2pm I thought I had made a big mistake but when we went into the kitchen they were has good as gold.

November 1996

On the 12th I had a double puncher on my bike, there and back so I had to be picked up, I think that I am carrying to much weight with all the books plus me 14_ stone, The cycle ride is 15 miles to Maidstone and I do find it very hard on the bike.

DIARY

MONDAY 16/12/96

It's been a bad morning, but managed to take it easy. Problem with my money with the prison authority. Got to class, bit lively went through the answer sheet for the RSA S124 Stage 1 I was doing. Then my tutor and I were marking the answers, and she was off to attend to one of the studies who was going to the library. I talked about my sentence with some of the students. We started with my work. My work was good but I need more practice as she said, but I have managed to show I was willing to learn. Went for a short break, then back in class. but I did not feel like carrying on, I just felt disturbed thinking a lot about my family, what's happening to them. I just hope I can be with them soon. Anyway I checked my watch. It was almost time to pack up, so just a few things to do. The other students were talking about Christmas and the teacher joined in the conversation. Then I asked of the possibility of attending the class on one afternoon in the future, which my tutor said would be okay. End of class.

TUESDAY 17/12/96

Not in class today due to me having a flu and cold. I worked in my cell on the RSA. I found it more interesting to do some reading and writing in my cell. Worked for one hour.

WEDNESDAY 18/12/96

Went to class this morning. Saw my tutor and she decided everyone could watch a film. Everyone was happy and it was a good thing to do and it's Christmas time. We all enjoyed the time we spent together in class watching the film. Told her that I will be going to library when it's 9.30am. She took my book herself to the library for me. Just five students were in so it was quiet and peaceful.

THURSDAY 19/12/96

Not in class again due to flu!

FRIDAY 20/12/96

Came to class went through my work with my teacher. She told me she was pleased with my work. I did some quick cleaning in the class for her. She helped me mark my work on the RSA English, and I will be doing the essays later on. I found it more difficult when I was doing it, but I tried a lot not to be put off and I was in the end pleased to see I have improved and did well.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

FRIDAY 3/01/97

Got up early,came to class still a little quiet, but I got started with my RSA English, although I worked a bit on this during the holiday. Went through my work with the new teacher, he was pleased. Talked generally with the students. Time for break. Went through some notes. End of the day.

THURSDAY 09/01/97

Came early to class, saw Mickey my teacher on the way, Helped her with the flower pots. Really busy but managed to sort out everyone's needs, She told me she would be with me shortly. I would like to try a few more tests. I want to achieve a lot, not just coming to do reading or written work. I want some qualifications, Then may be this might help get some work later when I am released. Did some practice with the computer so I can type up most of my work. Some of my classmates helped me out. It was a bit hard but constant practice will make it easier. My teacher talked to me about the last day of the diaries to be submitted.

FRIDAY 10/01/97

Woke up having a headache but managed to get moving. On my way to class I was called to do [DST] drug test, so I will miss the class for some time during the day. It wasn't a good morning for me. The "Thinking Skills Course" I was hoping to do has been refused me, saying my sentence is too early. What a set back! Because I have sent my mind on it.

MONDAY 13/01/97

I started a new course in printing. Went to the English class to have a word with my English teacher. Talked about my work. She said someone will type my work for me which I already started on Friday, so I went back on printing class. The teacher went through the procedure with me. We got started and I was useful to the class. Die some memo printing. I would like to put all the skills I am learning into practice in future because I am serving a long sentence. So I will make use of my time. Everything I learn will be put together. I have a little knowledge in electronics and wiring which will help if my printing machine is faulty. Also the English I can read and write what I want to print. My family will be visiting tomorrow. Looking forward to that. I really miss them.

TUESDAY 14/1/97

Missed class because I went to the doctor for some medication. Worked a bit in my cell. Went through all my essays.

WEDNESDAY 15/1/97

Everyone was in class. I told my teatcher what I would be doing. Talked about the weather which was so bad. I went to collect some A4 paper for the computer. I called one of my classmates to help with the typing. After finishing I went to see Mickey to help in correcting the errors. She also discussed a few things with me about an article for the English and Maths class.

THURSDAY 16/1/97

Came to see Mickey. She was really busy but I just completed a few things I had to do. So I can go to the printing class.

FRIDAY 17/1/97

It was 8:40am when I got to class. I got my work started, I have a lot to do. I am getting used to the computer but it is still a bit hard. I don't think I could have done this if I was on the outside but being in prison I have put my mind to it and the teachers have been really helping me. Much effort has been made for me by introducing a lot of other skills which have been helpful. I was in the middle of my typing when everyone had to go back to the wing for a security check. Not sure, maybe we will get back. Got back to the wing, DST came to give me a search because bit a 'CAT A' prisoner they search you every fourth night. When they had finished I just decided to clean my cell, so I missed the session of morning class.

Writing the diary has made me keep account of daily activities. I found it more interesting each day I thought about it. I think a lot of people should be encouraged to write a diary.

WORDS AND BIRDS

Dec 4th - 8.30 to 10.15

At 8.30 this morning I continued working on my basic English. I am reading a group of books which describe an accident. They describe the accident from different people's points of view. At the moment I am reading book 4 which is the car passenger's story. There are exercises to do on each book after you have read it. They test that I have understood what I have read and also help with improving my writing and spelling. There are 6 books in all and at the end more overall exercises where you have to decide who caused the accident. I like doing these exercises because they help me to read and write better, and also because by looking at it from lots of people's point of view I have to think very hard about what happened. I worked on this until about 9.30 when I had a change and used some tape which tell me the sounds of letters.

Dec 4th 10.15 to 11.45

Environmental Studies

This is an Environmental Studies class. Mr Titcombe showed us some slides of the habitat at Glascoed. They showed the ringing of ducks, the different barn owls that live there, the rooks nesting in the beams of an old works storage depot at Glascoed.

It had been an ammunition depot where bombs were made for the last war. Now it has been left and the wild life has taken over. We also saw a film about Slimbridge and the varieties of birds there. There are hides there for people to watch the bird activity through high powered binoculars. It was very interesting. They use rockets with nets attached to catch the ducks to examine, measure and check their numbers.

Dec 4th

Wednesday afternoon I changed my kit as usual and picked up my canteen.

Dec 5th

In this morning's maths lesson I finished off exercises of long division. I have now started on the four rules of decimal money which I found easier because I am used to handling money.

Dec 5th 10.14 to 11.15

Social NP Skills

During our Life and Social Skills lesson I saw a programme on time travel. Some scientists were talking about whether it might be possible or not and explaining their theories. They didn't agree with one another. I think it is not possible.

Dec 5th 1.15 to 2.45

Current Affairs

In the afternoon's Current Affairs lesson we looked at some cuttings or recent news stories and discussed them in depth. One was about the Duchess of York who owes a lot of money and is trying to pay it off. Then there was an Irish wolfhound, 4ft 5ins tall which ate 15 kilos of dog food every fortnight as well as lots of biscuits and vegetables. We talked about the Meningitis outbreak in Cardiff (which is near here), and very frightening. then we finished off by looking at a programme on air accident investigations which I found very interesting.

Dec 5th pm 2.45 to 4.45

Cooking

I made an apple pie in Cookery this afternoon. I made it by myself, with no help, and with the left over pastry I made some jam tarts, all of which worked out well. I had to leave them until the next day to eat as they were too hot. I have always enjoyed cooking as I have had to look after myself for many years.

Dec 10th 1.15 to 2.00. 2.00 to 4.45

Craft

We listened to a talk on gardening by one of my fellow inmates - Mr Webb. It was part of the course he is doing, everyone has to be able to give a talk. It was very good, he was nervous at the beginning, but as he went through the stages he improved and gained in confidence. We learned how to make compost, how to transplant and how to prepared the ground by double digging, among other things. I enjoyed the talk very much and learned a lot. Craft 2.00 - 4.45. I am still in the middle of sanding down a matchstick model of a Norman Church which I have been making in the past few weeks. It is a long job but will be worth it in the end.

Dec 11th 8.30 to 10.15

Life and Social Skills

We watched a video about young people living on the streets. A young girl was beginning for money as she was not old enough for Income Support and needed money to buy food. She lived underneath a car park in a makeshift hut of work and cardboard. A few blankets gave her some warmth but it was very damp and cold. Some members of Parliament visited the group and they told them that the police had been taking them to court for begging. But how were they to get money if they couldn't beg? The MPs promised to look into it. Some of the group were pretending to be homeless, begging and using the money to buy drugs. It was a very interesting programme and

afterwards we talked about it and gave our points of view. It really did make you think.

Dec 11th 10.15 to 11.45

English

I worked on my book - the last one, book 5. - The Policewoman's Story. I finished it and now I have to do one more thing - general exercises on all 5 books. These test what you can remember about the accident. There is also a crossword which tests spelling and a form to fill in so there is still a lot to do, including drawing a plan from all the drivers points of view.

I am enjoying doing these exercises - because they help my reading and spelling.

Dec 12th 1.45 to 2.45

Maths

We had a test this afternoon. We had to do the RSA Basic Numerical Skills, Stage 1, exam paper. We could not use calculators. It was very hard, there was a bit of everything, some things were easier than others.

Dec 12th 2.45 to 4.45

Cookery

We finish off on a Tuesday with Cookery. I made a Vegetarian Stir-fry, as I don't eat meat because I have a medical condition which means meat and fish would have a bad effect on me. They would make me sick. The Stir-fry had chopped carrots, potatoes, onions, parsley, swede and peas in it. I added pepper and salt for extra flavour. I ate it with a jacket potato which I baked in the oven. The other people in the class made things with meat which they enjoy. We have to take care with cleanliness and some of us have taken our Hygiene Court which we have to have. There is a certificate which says we passed.

I came up to the Education Department because I needed to improve my reading and writing skills. Since I am disabled I should not be able to work at a prison job so coming to classes gives me a new purpose. My time here is being used sensibly, I have improved already and hopefully will act even better. I enjoy the lessons, some more than others, but one the whole it is a good thing to do, and I am glad to do it.

MY WORK DIARY

Monday

I've been to work and did a bit of my course. I have started to do this since I've been in prison. Before I came I never had very much of an Education and did not think I ever would. I also got some results from some of my essays today. I am very happy with them. I get a lot of support from the staff here, which helps.

I can go to them when I need help with my reading and writing. Angela has helped me with my English and people explain things to me when I don't understand them. For example: Laurie, the DTP tutor, explained all the computer lingo to me in order for me to understand things better.

Tuesday

I've been to work in the library, this is what my job here is all about. Being not very bright when I was out I did not think I would ever be able to do the job that I do. I've learnt a lot. I now know how to shelve my books alphabetically in the correct order. I knew my alphabet before but I didn't know how to run it in order all the way through the authors surname. I can also shelve non fiction in its number categorisation. Viv had a lot of patience with showing me this and then I had to keep doing it which gave me lots of practice. I realise now that by doing this I learn easier. My spelling has improved also. Angela helped me with this and I can use a dictionary now - more of that practice with alphabetical order, I try now whereas before I didn't have the confidence to even start.

Wednesday

Today is my day for doing the inter loans, that means that books came from an outside library. I have to write book cards out for them and put the requests cards in ready for collection by other people. I also have to sort the new books out and put them on the shelves where

they can be seen easily. This is to let people know at a glance where to find them. I have to check the shelves for any stock that does not go out very often and take them off to send back to the main library. These are all things I've learnt. I didn't realise there would be so much involved.

Thursday

Today Pam and I did some paper work. We did stats; that is check how many people visited the library on each day, also how many fiction and non fiction books have been issued. Pam also helps me with any problems I have with my course and anything I don't understand to do with the daily running of the library. She showed me how to recover books and repair them. I found this interesting to learn and I also enjoy the work that I do, which for me says a lot.

Friday

Another paper-work day. Pam shows me how to do overdue letters which have to be recorded in a book so that we know who we sent them to. We also do a fair bit of inter loaning for the Education Department and teachers. We have to check the wings to see if there are any books lying around and empty the wing boxes. All the wings have one of these, once we have taken the books back to the library we have to check all the issues tickets to find the books' cards for the books. I did not think I would ever be able to do this kind of job but with a lot of help and patience from other people I now feel confident to be able to do it. I get a lot of satisfaction out of my job.

THE END

A WEEK OF LEARNING

Monday, I learned to work in a group with others, producing the prison magazine. You can learn from talking to people. I also learnt from the teacher how to scan pictures and articles on the computer.

Tuesday, I began to work towards a CLAIT certificate in Information Technology and Desktop Publishing. I carried on working with my maths. You can learn from classes that you go to.

Wednesday, I began to type up things on my Record of Achievement and later, I went to Pottery. My ex English teacher sent me some mock exams which I stayed up all night doing so I could send them to her Thursday. It makes a difference if you want to learn.

Thursday, I am learning Psychology which is a new subject for me. I've learned about learning in that class. I go to English later to work on my City and Guilds, then read and write some letters.

Friday, I went to Pottery in the morning and Art in the afternoon, which is also new to me, then I read my book. You can learn from books that you have read.

Saturday, I associated with the people on my wing, which, in a way, is a form of learning.

Sunday, I read my book when I was locked up and watched TV when I was out. You can learn things from programmes that you watch.

WE GET NEARER TO OUR GOAL

On Monday, some of us have been learning about Desktop Publishing, although it is quite difficult. We think that, if we persevere with it, we could really get to grips with it. We found out that if we are interested in a subject, it is more enjoyable and easier to learn.

Somebody said that when she listens to the news of war or problems such as famine, she realises how little she knows and she feels very small in the world.

On Tuesday, we learnt that we can experience a lot of emotions at once. One of the group was waiting for her mum to visit but she couldn't make it. She had told her she was coming, she didn't want to let her down. Although the girl understood, she still felt let down at all once. We learnt that self management is good. It should be a subject taught in school. If you get more organised, it makes your life less confusing.

On Wednesday, friends told one of us that she should be more sociable and make more friends. You have to learn to take other people's feelings into consideration. We learnt that punishing people doesn't get a positive reaction. If someone behaves badly, it is better to reinforce good behaviour, especially in children otherwise they can become dysfunctional adults. We learnt this in Psychology.

On Thursday, somebody said she had been trying to improve her spelling and in English today, she remembered how to spell a particular word. She really felt that she had achieved something. Somebody else said that she had learnt that, to survive through her time in prison, she had to change her quiet nature and stand up for herself more.

On Friday, we have been reading a book on Conditioning. Talking to our teacher, we found a lot of things about ourselves and our families and people in general. We think that judges should have a high qualification in Psychology before they judge people. We decided that when we feel negative about ourselves, we should think of all the things we've learnt since we were born.

On Saturday, we were bored but really, we should never get bored because there are always plenty of things to learn about and all we have to do is motivate ourselves to start them.

We also found out that shouting at people doesn't get good results. If you want somebody to do something, you have to be nice to them. We've talked about that in Psychology.

On Sunday, we decided to do our homework in a group. It was good because we all had different ideas and it was interesting to listen to other people's views, even if you didn't agree with them.

On Monday, we talked about the learning we had done. Somebody said that she was beginning to learn how to stop being a victim and to take control of her life. She thinks she's got a long way to go but she's learnt to keep going. We made up our minds that each time we learn something new about ourselves, we get nearer to our goal.

STILL SO MUCH TO READ

DIARY ***DAY 2***

DAY AND DATE Friday 22 November 1996

COMMENTS

It was a very pleasant morning. Quiet and peaceful. I was able to concentrate on my classical novel.

AM

I discussed my diary with the teacher and she was very helpful with it.

I got stuck in to `Sons and Lovers' purely as a break from my more serious studies. The teachers are pretty flexible. At the same time my thoughts had wandered to the next task in my modules. I thought I'd study `Crow' by Ted Hughes. I was feeling guilty about leap frogging onto another module before finishing `Crow' assignments. I thought that I must discipline myself more. The morning went extremely well.

Lunchtime PM

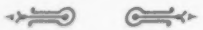
I watched the educational video in the lower classroom, as it is the expected thing to do. It was extremely interesting and very informative. I chatted with the teacher and she gave me some very useful tips about various English matters. I had noticed that the teacher was very well read and knew her subject well. It was worth paying attention to her. I noticed the interest shown by the other inmates as they watched the video (RSPCA documentary). Returned to my cell at 1600 on Fridays.

End of Day Thoughts

Another successful day and I had felt quite pleased with myself. Letter written to my pen-friend Elizabeth via the Prison Reform Trust. Thinking about my other pen-friend Sarah. I am concerned about the method of censureship here at Everthorpe. I don't know how they

deal with mail here. I don't like the thought of some stranger reading my mail. One has to think seriously when writing. I've admit to myself that I'm still concerning about returning to Hull. Only three years left. Book at bedtime relaxes me .. god knows.

End of day.
Prayers for the rest of the world. I pray for forgiveness and for my family and friends. I pray that the lord will keep me away from criminals. I pray for the people in Zaire, Africa and America. Goodnight.



DIARY ***DAY 5***

DAY AND DATE Monday 25 November 1996

COMMENTS

AM

The day was a difficult day. I had started the morning with a fresh positive attitude, but soon found the assignment on `Crow' a soul destroyer. I did think to myself, `Why should the powers that be introduce such a nonsensical module into such an interesting syllabus? I lost my patience with it.

It was far too noisy to concentrate on such a deep subject. I did realise the difference in age and had to be tolerant. I had thought, `We are all in the same boat here'. I returned to my cell feeling hot and bothered.

Lunchtime PM

I perservered and ended the afternoon session feeling quite pleased with myself. The teacher was very helpful and gave encouragement.

The teacher's comments on `Crow' gave me a lift and a little bit more understanding about Ted Hughes's style. I eventually decided to give myself a break from `Crow' and do some revision of another subject.

I thought to myself `I'll feel fresher in the morning. Returned to my cell feeling that I could have done better.

End of Day Thoughts

'Crow' has got to be completed and fully understood. I realised that the assignment would be hard/I must start to give the same dedication to this particular module as I have the rest.

In prison one must realise that basically that one will be working alone as the men are doing different subjects.

Groupwork is not possible because of the constant movement of prisoners. Teachers are most helpful with any problem and they have been and continue to be very encouraging.

I felt pretty weary by the end of the day.

End of day.

Prayers brief.

Spiritually drained.

DIARY ***DAY 32***

DAY AND DATE Sunday 22 December 1996

COMMENTS

AM

It was three days to Christmas Day and I wished that I had not committed that Armed Robbery in '92.

I watched the video and then returned to my cell to read `A Christmas Carol' by C Dickens.

Charles Dickens seems to be getting into the papers and on the radio quite a lot this year. I suppose it is to try and get people to be a little more generous. `Scrooge' is quite famous after all.

Lunchtime PM

I watched the afternoon video and then read some of Frankenstein.

I glanced at some of Rupert Brooke's poetry.

End of Day Thoughts

I must prepare my work for Monday and Tuesday. Only two days and it will be Christmas day.

I wonder if they will put on a Christmas spread for us at the education department???

I must get Dorothy a little present in appreciation of her hard work.

I think about my family at this time and it is quite upsetting that I should be stuck in prison.

I listened to a few carols to cheer me up.

Early night as the pressure is devouring.

Goodnight and bless all those less fortunate than myself. I pray that God will watch over everyone.

DIARY ***DAY 39***

DAY AND DATE Sunday 29 December 1996

COMMENTS

AM

I felt a hole lot better and tomorrow I'll be back at classroom studying Frankenstein. I watched the film in the video room and then returned to my cell for lunch.

I had for the first time in five days managed to eat my lunch.

I'm always glad when Christmas is over.

Lunchtime PM

I watched a really good film on the video.

Wrote a lovely letter to Harry and Audrey. Wrote a nice letter to my friend Ian, he is the son of Harry and Audrey.

Wrote a nice letter to Alex Mall. Thanked her for the lovely thought at Christmas.

End of Day Thoughts

Now that Christmas is well and truly passed, all the lads seem to be more cheerful. It's more bearable on the wing.

I started to get my work sorted out for school. School at 50, it sounds silly, however, we are at school all our lives when you think about it.

I must say my prayers tonight. God understands how I have been feeling.

End of day.

Prayers for my family and friends and all those less fortunate than myself . . . . . .

Goodnight. God Bless.

DIARY ***DAY 42***

DAY AND DATE Wednesday 1 January 1997

COMMENTS

AM

Today had been a day off. National holiday.

I did study a little of Frankenstein and then I proceeded to the video room to watch the film `The Godfather'. Fine example of the desire for power and greed.

The manipulation of people in high places.

I had enjoyed the film and the second half of it was to be shown later.

It is another method of learning and today I had felt better than I had for the last week.

Lunchtime PM

I had raced to the video room to see the second part of `The Godfather'. On completion I had returned to my cell and done a little more studying of Frankenstein.

End of Day Thoughts

Well: I really do feel as though another year is under my belt.

I must now concentrate on the examination that is due in June.

This 'A' level in Literature means so much to me. I hope that I get it right on the day. I am feeling quite pleased with my knowledge of the texts but I must revise seriously and also take a much more concentrated look at Grammar.

End of day.

Prayers. My family and friends and for all those less fortunate in the world. For the trouble in Israel and Jordan and also for the hostages in Peru. .....

Goodnight.

DAY AND DATE Sunday 5 January 1997

COMMENTS

AM

I had concentrated on Frankenstein and was doing quite well with it. It made me feel better that I was making up for the weekend off at Christmas.

.....that I had really to battle down even though I had been working hard at the classroom.

Lunchtime PM

Went and watched the film and then returned to my cell and looked again at my module.

Things were progressing nicely.

I had also started to read a little bit of religion.

End of Day Thoughts

It is very difficult to occupy and motivate oneself when every day is the same. I do have a huge amount of self motivation yet at times I do find the pinch.

On the 3rd of January 1997 my first poem was published in the Daily Express and this has given me a booster.

I prepared my work for Monday morning and called it a day.

End of day.

Prayers for my family and friends and for all those less fortunate than myself.

Goodnight and God Bless everyone.

I WON'T BE BACK

Monday 13 Jan

My name is ..... I am 34. I was born on ..... I went to school in Manchester. My school was Abraham ..... It was a good place but they didn't care if we learnt anything. Thats why none of us learned anything. Now I'm in jail for trying to get money so I could have a good life to start my own place of work. If I did get to do that I probably would of gone and went bust or got ripped off.

Now I'm in jail doing 5 years. One thing I do know. My five years will not go to waste, I've been in for ..... months and I've done Stage 1 and 2 City and Guilds. I'm on Stage 3 it takes a lot of my time but I enjoy it. I go to the library, read books and study.

Today when I went to Education I didn't do my project. We had a discussion about prison and why people keep coming back and what can the system do for them. It was a good discussion, everyone got involved. It was something everyone felt something about. We were trying to look into the future to see which of us in the class will end back in jail and who wouldn't. Theres one thing I know. I won't be back. When the lesson was over we still talked about it. And we didn't come to a compromise we still talk about it now and we still have not solved or come to sway to solve the situation.

Tuesday 14 Jan

I got up this morning ready for another day in prison. I don't think about where I am. I just get on with it. If you start thinking about where you are you wouldn't get anything done, and this place will break you. Thats why you have to train your body and mind. I've been to prison before and I studied and although we never got much out of it it was just something to teach us to read and write, which we needed then. Now I can do that, you don't know how good I feel to be able to write to my family. Now I would like to learn more. Which I intend to do. Another thing I didn't have confidence to be open about what I'm trying to learn. If I couldn't do something I would leave it

instead of asking. I would leave it and start on something else. I would feel foolish if someone could do it with ease and I struggled. That would make me mad. Now I feel more confident with myself to learn with other people and now I'm trying to get some qualifications which I didn't get at school. I didn't like English at school because I didn't understand it. Now I understand now I'm glad because when I get out I can teach my children. Instead of sending them to there mother so she could teach them. At the moment I'm doing a diary of an everyday account of what I'm doing in class.

Wednesday 15 Jan

Today we were talking about drugs and drug abuse with people in and out of jail. We asking why they take drugs and what do they get out of it, some of the boys told me it helps them out there because they have no life. So they take drugs. And they need money for their drugs so they go out and rob people and their houses. The people in here for selling drugs don't mind because its good money and given them a good lifestyle and they told me if they didn't sell it to them someone else would as I see it there is more drugs in jail than there are on the streets. People say drug takers ..... up the street but you can ..... say that because rock stars, film stars and other people take it. As I see it when you have the money and the power or a name you get off too lightly thats how I see it.

Thursday 16 Jan

Today I was working on my project. I was getting some data out of the Chronicle of the World. I am reading through the period of time concerning slavery and writing things down. When you get into studying you feel you are there and what it would be like. Me and all my class mates talked about it we had strong feelings about it. They told me what their parents told them about it and with what I know from what my mother told me it all fits in to place.

Today I started on my project it really is coming on 'good'. I really enjoy it. My friend needed some help with his project. I told him what book to look for, he is doing a project nearly the same as mine. We all

help each other out like a family helping each other. We don't care what colour or creed, in jail we are as one, and its a good way of learning. We ask one another for help. Sometimes there are ..... people from different areas, who on the out would probably try to kill each other. In here we forget all about the ..... out side and another thing we can relate to each other easier. .... with the teacher. We have nothing against the teacher. She is good. We feel at ease with our teacher and she has earned our trust and confidence.

BECOMING A FULLY FLEDGED LISTENER

My name is John. I am a inmate at HMP Bullingdon. This is a brief introduction recording the different courses I am doing at Bullingdon. I shall be describing the first few weeks regarding the courses I am doing, and then give a monthly description about my feelings as a learner.

On the 8-6-96, I was accepted on the industrial cleaners course. This is a four month course which awards two certificates if completed. The course is organised by the British Institute of Cleaning Science. There are two sections to the course.

Monday 8th of June 1996

First morning at work, was introduced to (Mr Dillon) Chief Instructor on the course. Spent the morning watching demonstrations on how to use various types of cleaning machinery and accessories.

In the afternoon I was asked to have a practice on the buffing machine, which enabled me to have a good idea on how to manoeuvre the buffing machine by doing various tasks.

Tuesday 9th

First test mopping and drying also buffing: instructor passed me (felt pleased).

Between Wednesday 10th and Friday 12th

I had four more tests; spray polishing, machine scrubbing and suction drying, bonnet mopping and suction cleaning: passed all four tests. (felt good).

At the end of my first week I am starting to show considerable interest toward the courses, although I have only done five tests.

Second week Monday 14 - Friday 19th July 1996

Practical various methods in carpet cleaning; shampooing, dry mopping and learnt about the various types of carpets which can be found in the industrial industries.

Saturday 20 - Sunday 21 July 96

Spent the weekend preparing for my tests, did some revision reading.

Monday 22nd July 96

Did my tests on three different types of carpets in the afternoon and passed.

Monday Evening

Read the course work package for Sociology 'A' level, and found the whole concept very interesting.

Tuesday 23rd - Friday 26th July

Did various cleaning jobs on 'D' wing, mainly floor polishing and machine scrubbing using wet suction machine. Also had a meeting with chief instructor who was quite happy with my progress.

The evenings of Tuesday 23 - Friday 26th July 96

Started Module 1, of Section A: Theory and Methods. The concept of the module examines the various perspectives of functionalism and Marxists views, conflict feminist views, methodology and ethnomethodology, micro and macro sociology, functions and dysfunctions in society.

I completed the first module in October 96: and I am now 3/4 way through Module 2, which is called Social inequality (stratification)

Studying has enlightened me with regards to the various functions in society. I am now able to look at society in a microscopic way.

I am now studying inequalities of various individuals, how they have to ensure these inequalities in society especially if they are from various ethnic groups.

During my course and self studies, I attended a six week course from 31-10-96 to 05-12-96, to become a listener. The course which is run by the Samaritans was extremely good. The advice and experience gained from the Samaritan tutors during the course was quite rewarding.

Prison can be a frightening, cruel and hostile environment for those who are entering into this type of institution for the first time in their lives. Therefore it is essential to have listeners within the prison environment. To be able to alleviate misery, loneliness, despair and depression, by listening to and befriending those who feel that they have no one else to turn to, who would understand them and accept them, is in my opinion very important.

I will be a fully fledged listener in March 1997, after receiving my certificate from the Samaritans.

July 29th 1996 - January 9th 1997

It has been seven months since I have been on the industrial cleaning course, I have completed parts one and two of the course and I am now under instructions for NVQs City and Guilds qualifications. I am hoping to obtain another 3 levels in NVQs, hopefully by the end of 1997. If I am successful I will obtain a diploma from the British Institute of Cleaning Science.

From what I have written, my life may sound impressive but, prison life is not exactly a life of luxury. I have had my own personal ups and down, and coming to terms with the fact of being in prison is and can be very depressing at times. I have found that through the different studies I am doing, my time has been occupied in a concessive way.

I have achieved GCSEs in various subjects a few years ago, but never furthered my education, silly me. Now that I have the chance to use my time in a constructive way, I intend to achieve the knowledge and understanding which would prepare me to lead a better life in the near future.

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